

PUNCH



CHARIVARIA



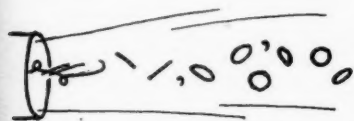
ORPHANS of the phone-tapping storm who have received little recognition or sympathy are the members of the Kent Education Committee. They had declared in a recent report that their biggest difficulty in absorbing seven hundred Hungarian refugees into the community was to convince them that "our officials could be trusted."

East is East, Dash It

WITH the royal visit to America definitely on (according to the latest dispatches from Press and Palace) British chests swelled with a quiet pride to read that the U.S. Government was buying a new official red carpet, in anticipation of visits by "foreign heads of state," to replace their present "torn and threadbare one." It was rather deflating to learn that it would be first unrolled under the feet of "Nobusuku Kishi, the Japanese Premier."

G.W.T.W.

IN the welter of news about the Aurora, Mr. and Mrs. Todd, bikinis in the Queen's Bench Division and the numbers per hour of cars leaving London for the coast, the new wind tunnel opened at Farnborough received only passing attention, and the figure of

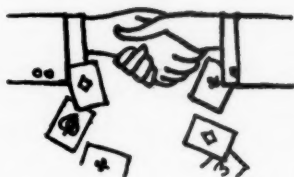


eleven million pounds, its cost, rather less. Even Mr. Aubrey Jones, in his inaugural address, failed to stir up much interest, despite his pointing out what had been missed elsewhere—that the eleven million was merely the cost of the tunnel, and that there was a matter of another thirty million "for the facilities in general." Here and

there, of course, an amateur statistician flickered into rumination, listlessly estimating that the total cost of the new testing-gear for supersonic (and, experts have led us to believe, obsolescent) military aircraft would pay the present Arts Council subsidy for eighty-two years.

First Things First

IN launching the International Geophysical Year both Prince Philip and President Eisenhower emphasized that its most vital property was the harmonious co-operation of peoples of all nations, and the President added a hope



that "this can become common practice in other fields of human endeavour." Judging by early misgivings about China and Russia, peoples of all nations will feel more than satisfied if it becomes common practice during the International Geophysical Year.

A Trouble Shared . . .

PLANS are reported under way to make the U.S.A.F. station at Wethersfield "the most beautiful American air base in the United Kingdom" and all units will take a hand in laying out gardens and rearing blooms to plant in them. Local nurserymen look forward to hearing about the station's experiences with greenhouses.

A Very Bad Example

MANY readers of *The Times* were shocked last week to find the paper following the deplorable practice of some contemporaries by printing, briefly

and in an unobtrusive corner, the correction to an inaccurate news story splashed prominently a few days before. The admission, tucked away in "News in Brief," that a rare disease affecting chamois was thought to be carried by "mites," not "mice," must have been missed by many readers of the earlier report, and it is to be hoped that Sir William Haley will be man enough to offer compensation to chamois-owners who have been misguidedly mousing all this time.

Simple as That

SICKENED by the diplomatic smoke-screens of evasion, provision and modification which obscure the ends of disarmament discussions, dispirited peace-lovers warmed eagerly towards Dr. Adenauer the other day. He told a Christian Democrat rally that West German agreement on disarmament was contingent upon only one condition—"simultaneous settlement of the causes of international tension."

Youth at the Helm

PLANS to introduce driving lessons into the curriculum of senior schoolboys would put an end, says a headmaster,



to the "usual frantic adult rush to cram through the driving test." Also the usual frantic adult rush to buy a car.

On a Plate

It was probably a touch of heatwave hyperbole, but Dame Evelyn Sharp should have thought twice before telling a London meeting "I believe shooting is too good for people who drop litter

in the countryside." East European propagandists will be on to this like a shot, with stories of harmless British



picnickers mown down by Council for the Preservation of Rural England firing squads loosing off from the undergrowth of Ashdown Forest.

Deserves a Silly Answer

SEEKING reasons for the presence of Dr. Ramo, America's "top guided-missile man" in this country, the *News Chronicle* diarist got a "Don't know" from the Ministry of Defence, a "Here on pleasure" from the U.S. Embassy and a "Strictly business" from the visitor himself, while British guided weapons spokesmen countered with "Who is Dr. Ramo?" and "How do you spell it?" and the diarist had to end a promising paragraph with, "Maybe he is just admiring the beauties of nature." This had all the others wishing they'd thought of that one at the time.

Whitest of All

To call an H-bomb "clean"
Makes sense and sound divergent,
Unless it's meant to mean
The Ultimate Detergent.



"At £1,750 we'll just have to re-include M.P. as a worthwhile career."

INTERCEPTS OF THE WEEK

NORMAN: ... Rab suggested I might ask you to look in.
GWILYM: Rab did?

NORMAN: I thought Wednesday, if that would suit you. Walter and Patrick will be coming along.

GWILYM: Yes, well, let me see. No, unfortunately I find I have to go down to the country on Wednesday.

NORMAN: Any other day will do just as well really.

GWILYM: Unfortunately I have to go down to the country then, too.

NORMAN: Oh. What a pity.

GWILYM: You'll tell Rab how much I appreciate his asking me, won't you? Anything I can ever do for old Rab, just let me know.

(Transcript sent to the National Council for Civil Liberties.)

CHARLES: ... But don't you see, Duke, this is something big.

DUKE: I'm afraid I'm not interested.

CHARLES: But Arundel could be—

DUKE: No, I'm really not interested.

CHARLES: I know what it is. You've had a bid from Wolfson.

DUKE: I've never met Mr. Wolfson.

CHARLES: He's a smart man, Wolfson. But they don't come any smarter than Charles Clore.

DUKE: I assure you—

CHARLES: I suppose it's Hugh Fraser, then. Wants to open a branch of Barker's down there, perhaps.

(Transcript sent to the National Trust.)

ERNEST: Kenneth, I think I've found someone to take over when you drop out in the autumn.

KENNETH: Oh, good show. Who's that?

ERNEST: Why not Randolph?

KENNETH: Randolph?

ERNEST: Yes, isn't he supposed to have had some kind of a bust-up with Max's boys? He'll be looking out for something, won't he?

KENNETH: I just wondered if he had exactly the right cultural background. I know one can't expect everyone to do a stint at the National Gallery and so on, but all the same—

ERNEST: He's a writer, isn't he?

KENNETH: Do you ever read him?

ERNEST: Never have time to read anything these days. Sorting letters, designing greetings telegrams, giving luncheons to all my predecessors, and of course the Premium Bonds on top of it all.

KENNETH: And hasn't he got some kind of a tie-up with the other lot?

ERNEST: I can fix that, if that's all you've got against him.

KENNETH: It isn't.

(Transcript sent to the Director-General of the B.B.C.)

KWAME: ... If you can be in the hard-currency area and stay in the Commonwealth, I don't see why I shouldn't.

DIEF: Well, you have to have all these dollars, you know.

KWAME: I can get dollars. I can sell more cocoa.

DIEF: How is your cocoa doing, by the way? No more swollen-shoot?

KWAME: Only I've just thought of something. If I'm in the dollar area maybe I won't still be able to have my own money with my picture on it.

(Transcript sent to Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference.)

CALLER 1: Hallo? Is Georgi Maximilianovitch there, please?

CALLER 2: No, he's out.

CALLER 1: Well, is Vyacheslav Mikhailovitch there?

CALLER 2: No, he's out too.

CALLER 1: What about Dimitri Trofimovitch, then?

CALLER 2: Out.

CALLER 1: Lazar Moiseyevitch?

CALLER 2: He's out.

CALLER 1: Dammit, is everybody out?

CALLER 2: Everybody except me. Hold on while I get another drink.

CALLER 1: No thanks.

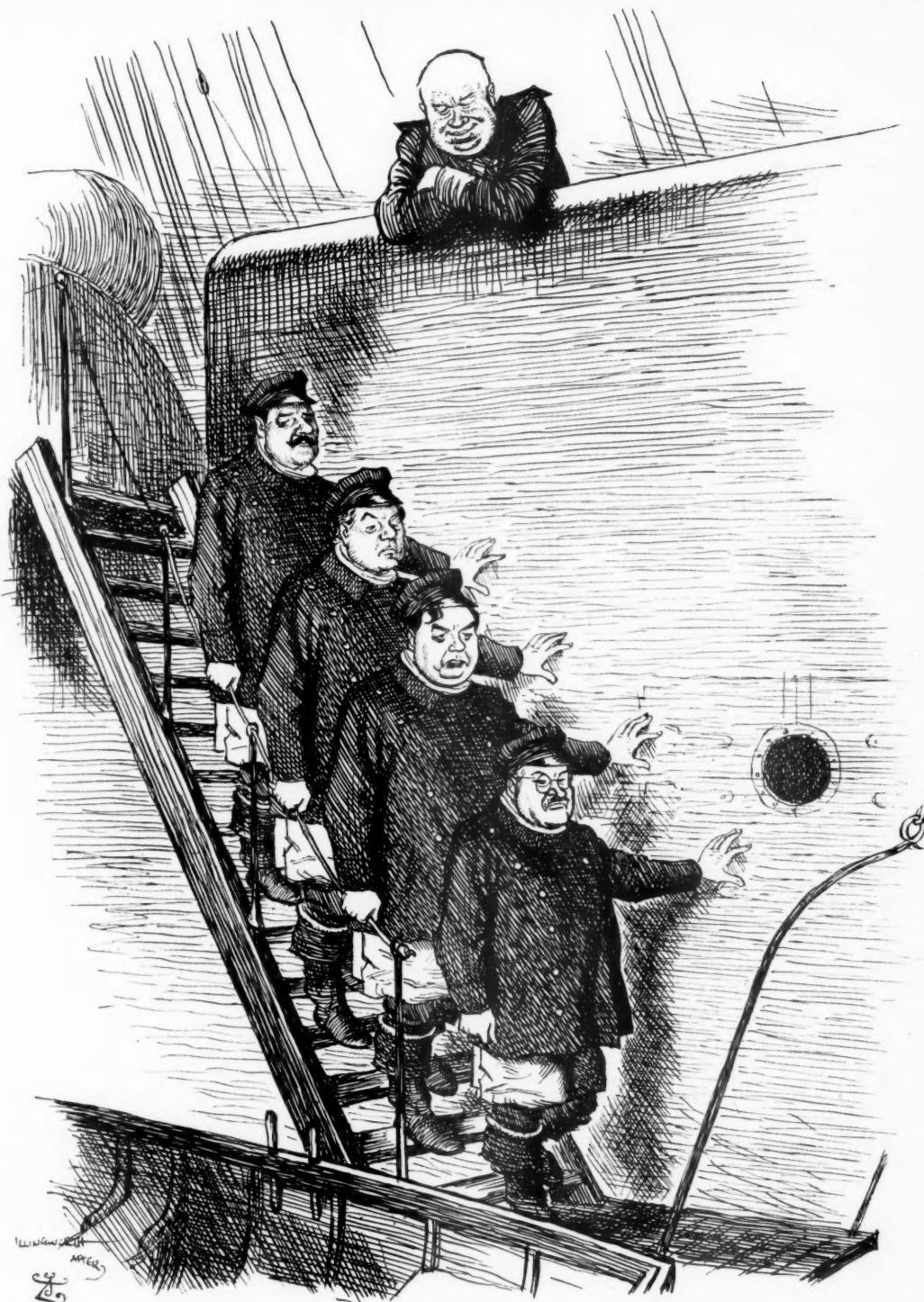
(Transcript sent to Nikita Khrushchev.)

§ §

"100th Birthday.—Mr. Charles port will start a 21-mile bus tour of London on Sunday costing 3s. and taking place twice daily."

Daily Telegraph

As long as he lasts.



DROPPING THE PILOTS

Do Women Make Good Mothers?

By SIRIOL HUGH JONES

THOUGH the Press is constantly drawing our attention to the fact of women, many people who otherwise keep a close hold on current events are no longer sure what women are, especially nowadays when the status is hardly ever quo and things are rarely what they seem. Women are readily obtainable, though not always by mail order, and chain stores and self-service shops do not yet stock them. Women are not always easily recognizable as such, being frequently disguised as pears, loaves, jumble sales, horses, Sabrina, or men, and some notes on identification may prove helpful.

Women do not care much about Commitment and are not generally to be found in the van of new trends and movements, though some of them vote and quite a few know Colin Wilson. This summer women are all smothered in protective cream, oil that turns you brown, lotion that stops you turning brown, and greasy stuff that absolutely defies you to develop those little crinkly

laughter-lines around the eyes. Other things they are smothered in include roses, Madam Butterfly-type hair-ornaments, scent economically *sprayed* on with none of that nasty expensive dabbing, and motor-cyclists' jackets in fondant-coloured moquette. Women who can read are sometimes Top People, though these are not necessarily the ones with Uncluttered Lines.

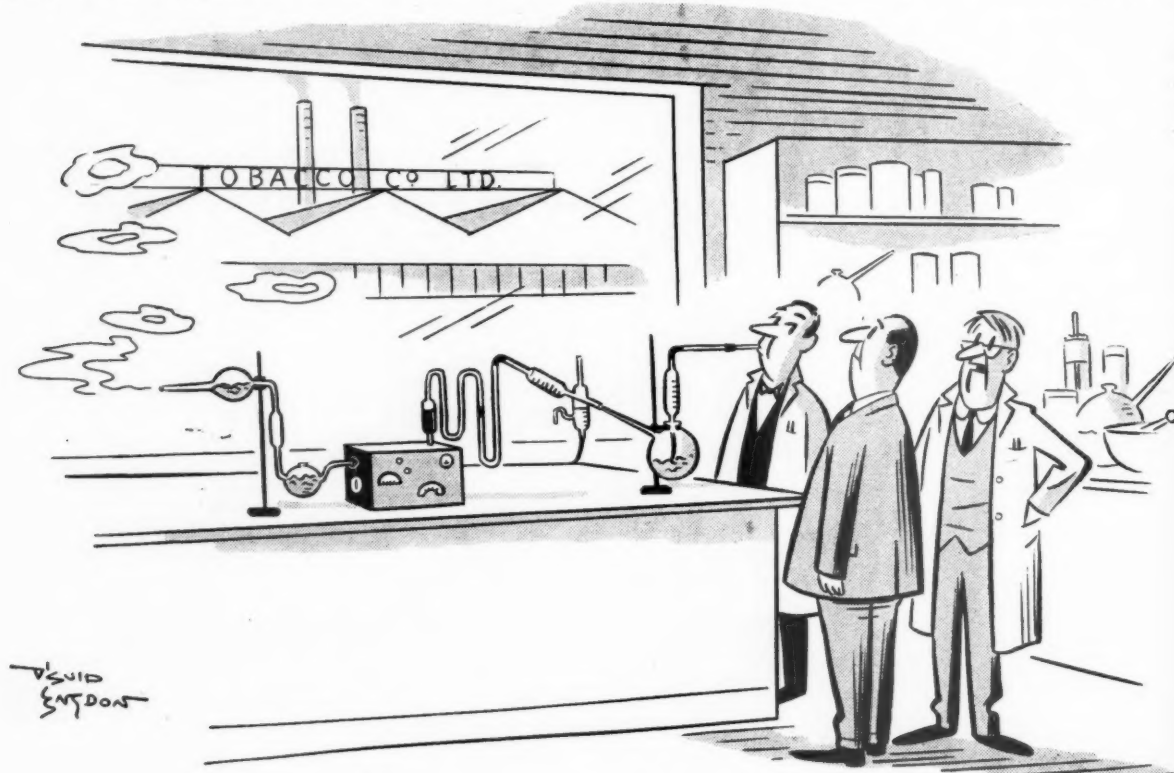
Some women are born knowing what to wear with what, others do it by sheer hard labour. At Covent Garden gala nights women can be identified by their boldly-patterned cotton sundresses, ventilated sandals, and stoles—either shaggy and comforting or gauzy and oriental according to the weather. In the stalls the women are the ones with sensible plastic carry-alls and savagely sunburnt backs.

Some women have a hat-philosophy, others just wear them to hide their faces. Mrs. Gerald Legge, who is practically a prototype model and therefore very useful for reference when

in doubt, usually wears a sou'wester especially when curing her hay-fever by inspecting the Westminster sewers. A lot of women still drag around in unmentionables such as head-scarves, plastic bags, flower-pieces they bought for weddings, old hairnets with pins falling out of them, and folded newspapers for Wimbledon.

Women on the whole do not like men, but will accept them if young, inarticulate and stricken with pelvis-palsy, or very old and romantic with a broken accent. Bald men and Yul Brynner have a paralysing success with those women who have the sort of father-fixation that only hypnosis will shift.

A complicating factor is that there are many different kinds of women, all guaranteed genuine, of which Dr. Summerskill, Jayne Mansfield, Elsa Maxwell and the model girls are just a selection taken at random. Women are interested in detergents, how to organize a dainty supper-party for six in a bachelor-girl flat, how to team up your



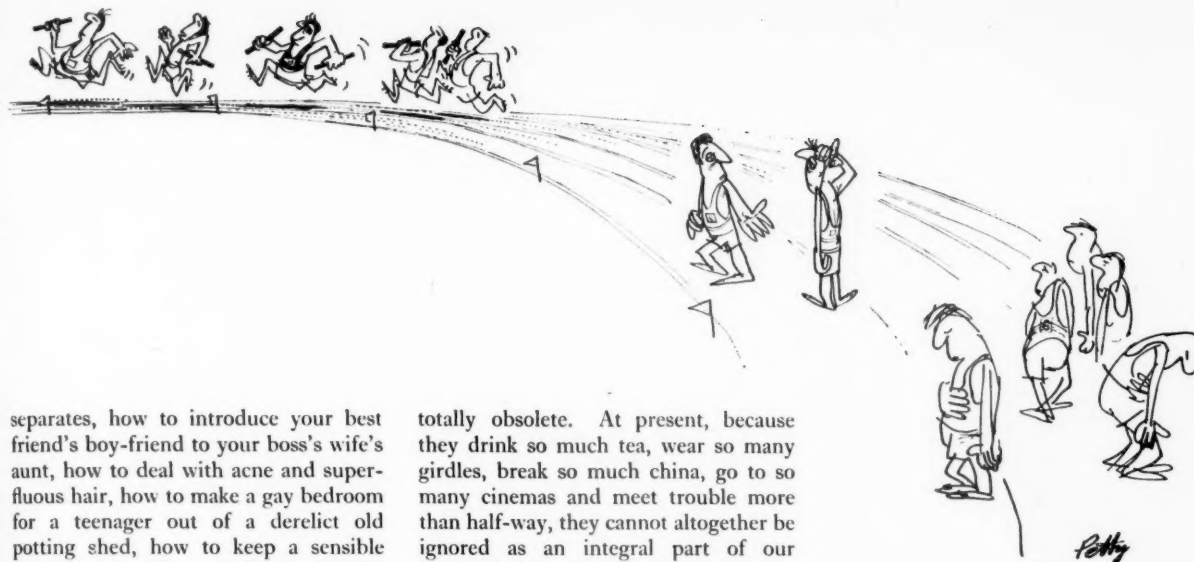
"The problem now is to get all that into a filter tip."

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separates, how to introduce your best friend's boy-friend to your boss's wife's aunt, how to deal with acne and superfluous hair, how to make a gay bedroom for a teenager out of a derelict old potting shed, how to keep a sensible attitude towards negativism in the two-year-old, and how to become every day and in every way more and more like Henrietta Tiarks, Ingrid Bergman or Eve Perrick. Women kiss and tell Miss Edana Romney.

Women have lots of special things intended for them alone, such as powder closets, railway carriages, television programmes, festivals, maternity hospitals and almost every page of all the newspapers. Women are encouraged to join the Trade Unions, the House of Commons, the Family Planning Association, television quiz games, the staff of *Vogue*, and Childbirth Without Fear. The English also like women to play cricket, open doors for themselves, and cox an occasional Oxford crew.

So far no good substitute for women has been discovered for the purpose of child-bearing. Everything else, including the wearing of top hats at Ascot and running cookery demonstrations, is done better by men. If, of course, you need a film star with a bust, a Wagnerian soprano, a wife, or just a good sturdy creature about the place to lift heavy weights and carry luggage, in fact a woman can hardly be bettered and you should begin to look around for one right away. For almost every other purpose a good valet, accountant, bookmaker, President of the Cambridge Union, or Quatermass Experiment, will come in handier.

Women are an out-of-date institution which automation and advanced business efficiency methods may render

totally obsolete. At present, because they drink so much tea, wear so many girdles, break so much china, go to so many cinemas and meet trouble more than half-way, they cannot altogether be ignored as an integral part of our National Economy and Sunday Press. No-one who is neither a columnist nor actually cares much about women need give them another thought, since what with giving each other professional advice, selling clothes to each other, getting together little tea-parties and writing books for each other to read, they are by now practically able to fend

for themselves. Some experts, in fact, give them only a few more years to go, so field-workers, collectors, museum curators and antique dealers with strong American connections should lay up a good stock before this particular line goes out of production.

Herd Melodies

Russia is to have a new national anthem

THE cold-blooded composition of a brand new national anthem
Is a task for angels or innocents, but not for the ordinary run.
Only the very simple are likely to try to do it
And only the still more simple to try to sing it when done.

The words are of small importance. They start with a common concept,
But varying local factors tend to vary the result.
Ghana has lots of gods to invoke for Mr. Nkrumah
And Russia has neither gods nor a personality cult.

You can take the tune ready-made and leave it to acquire an aura,
Or chance your arm with a new one. The former is better on the whole.
It is harder to write a hit than hope, in the course of generations,
To tie patriotic fervour to the tune of Old King Cole.

Either way it's a gamble. It may go right from the beginning,
Given a national crisis to get the temperature high,
Or it may be a painful business, with children fidgeting and fooling
And grown-ups sweating slightly and avoiding everybody's eye.

Habit can hallow much that is hardly intrinsically holy
And mass emotion amend the lack of the patina of years:
But something must start the habit or get the numbers into action,
And the age is grown too picked for the easy summoning of tears.

P. M. HUBBARD



"Well, what did you expect? We come down here, hire fifty thousand native extras, dress them in uniforms, drill them with flintlocks . . . Why should they follow the script when they can take over the country?"

Candidus Goes to a Party

By LORD KINROSS

WE looked down over London, as Rastignac looked over Paris. The parks lay spread beneath us, and beyond them the palaces, and the apartment blocks, and the department stores, and the Albert Memorial. Darting in and out of the rooms and on to the terrace and in again was a small, nut-brown man with restless scintillant eyes.

"His name," I explained, "is Mike Todd. He wants London to be at his feet."

"In that beach costume?" asked Candidus, surveying with some disapproval his sky-blue linen pants and *espadrilles* and fish-net shirt.

"Any costume. He has just flown in from the South of France. He never quite knows where he is, here or there."

"And what is his line? He is an evangelist, like Mr. Billy Graham?"

"No. A different sort of showman. He wants people to be happy."

Having contemplated London, we wandered back into the suite. Miss Elizabeth Taylor was being led off to rest by her husband, a berry-brown snuggle-puppy in a lace wrap by Dior.

"She's a little bit pregnant," he said to us. "So she's got a bum back."

The suite was full of people, most of whom were using telephones. A Japanese nurse was using a telephone, while two small boys, clean and solemn and white in their night attire, moved around, looking out at London and in at the people with the cool self-possession of budding psychiatrists.

"You gotta sword-swallow?" Mr. Todd said to one of his secretaries.

"Well, we have a juggler, and a fire-eater."

"I wanna sword-swallower . . . No I don't wan any Cabinet Ministers. Get me Lady Pamela on the line . . . Lady Pamela, I love you but I'm gonna punch you on the nose. No Cabinet Ministers. Nobody ever saw a pretty Cabinet Minister. I don't wannem . . . She should relax," he added, putting down the receiver, then darting off into the nursery suite, leading by the arm a lady columnist from Hollywood in a garden-party hat.

A lady secretary meanwhile was talking into another telephone: "Yes, a fabulous party . . . the world's largest

midget . . . a tank full of invisible Brazilian fish . . . the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, the Duchess of . . . stop eating those salted peanuts, kids, you'll be sick . . . two thousand plastic rain-coats, twenty-five carriage umbrellas. . . who's that? Oh yes, come on in and sit down . . ."

A shy couple, wearing Victorian costume, came in and sat down.

"We're the Dickensian Jazz Band," they said. "We feel sure Mr. Todd'll want to engage us for his party."

"That's a curious costume you're wearing," said Candidus.

"Curious for a gentleman to wear a smoking-jacket at this time in the evening?"

Mr. Todd darted in again. "Who's this?"

"The Dickensian Jazz Band. They wrote to you."

"Whatya do?"

"We play at the Royal College of Art. We play at the Annual Soirée of the Architectural Association. Here are our pictures."

Mr. Todd thumbed quickly through them, rose and sped into the next room.

"Tellem to phone later . . . Don't

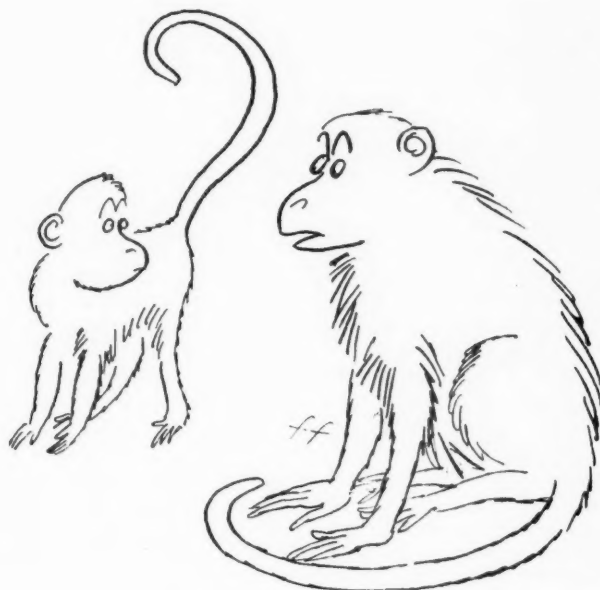
wannem. They're sad. Sad, *sad*. Don't wan anything sad, sec? . . . Buskers? What are they? . . . No, they sound sad. Don't wannem . . . I wan more brass bands. How many can you get? They don't have to play good, they only have to play loud . . . Okay, but I suppose they'll say they only know *My Fair Lady*. Don't wan any of that stuff. They'll play *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Okay? . . . Now these ticket locations, the hundred-guinea ones . . ."

Rising again, he led us out on to the terrace and gazed down upon London glowing away across the trees in the evening sunlight.

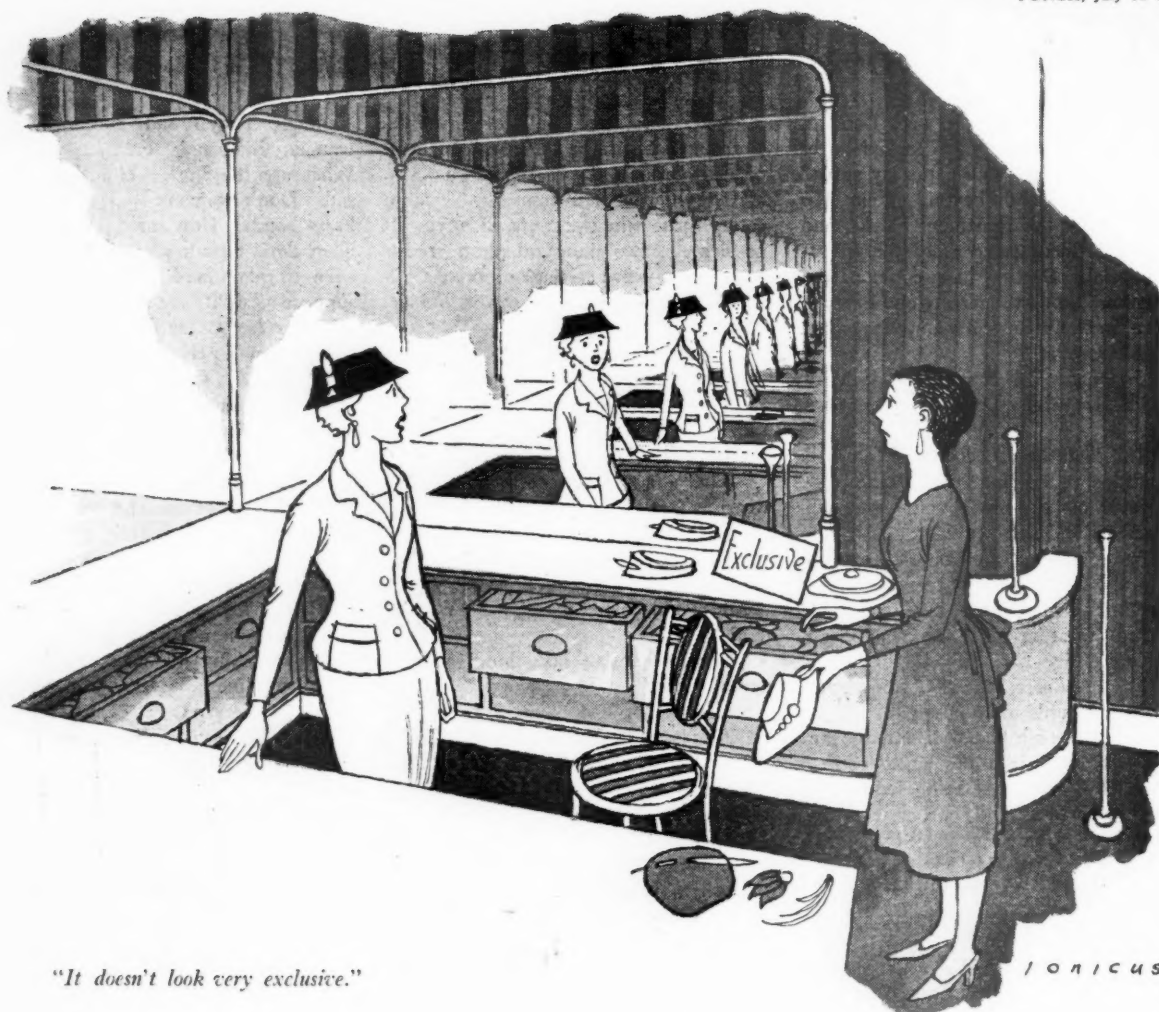
"I wanna bring these people some sunshine. Happiness, yes. But not just being happy about it afterwards. Being happy now, and knowing they're happy. Making memories every day. That's the line for you. I wanna make memories every day."

Swiftly he was gone, was heard inside saying, "See that the cooling-plant's working okay, even if you've gotta lose some men stoking up the furnaces to do it. There's nothing louses up a show more than body-heat."

So to the film. "Eighty days seems



" . . . and for heaven's sake stop asking questions!"



"It doesn't look very exclusive."

a long time," remarked Candidus. Three hours seemed a long time, with the teenagers screaming away in the street outside, and Mr. Todd darting hither and thither in the interval exclaiming "Body-heat. That's what the Rank organisation does to me."

Then the rain brought cool. Beneath the carriage umbrellas the hundred-guinea, fifty-guinea, twenty-five guinea guests processed to the buses, among them the two prettiest of the Cabinet Ministers, one named Eccles and one named Sandys. A pink Duke stood hesitant amid the crowd on the pavement, never having boarded a bus before. Ladies, in the same predicament, found difficulty in getting down the stairs from the top deck, doing so delicately, backwards, as down a com-

panionway. Flashes of lightning accompanied the flashes of cameras aimed at the Ministers and the Duchesses inside.

De-bussing in a deluge, they embarked on boats and huddled below, crowded together like jewelled slaves in galleys, while the bands played manfully in the rain. Still in the rain, they disembarked at Battersea, to be cloaked in plastic macs of many colours. More brass bands awaited them, and the foods of all nations—Eton messes from England, mango ices from India, chowders from China, *Pollo con Limon* with stuffed peppers from Spain, Sweet Ham Virginia Style with peach pickles from the U.S.A.—and spaghetti-like streamers of paper getting into their hair. Waiters, dressed like Bedouin sheikhs, hobbled from table to table,

bent beneath the weight of Methuselahs of champagne. Merry-go-rounds went merrily round, and fortune-tellers told fortunes, promising nothing but happiness for all.

"But I want to be *miserable*," lamented an American visitor.

Candidus gazed around him, a little dismayed. "This will go on," he inquired, "for eighty days?"

"I expect so," I said, jumping on to a rocking-horse with the principal of an Oxford college.

Candidus got home around eight in the morning. "I caught the last bus," he said, then smiled with a coy satisfaction. "The other passengers thought I was a movie-star. But I wouldn't tell them which. They kindly dropped me off at Claridge's."

On the Road to Moscow

By H. F. ELLIS

BARNES, July 2nd
YOUR Correspondent has not yet started. Miss Patricia Smyllie of the *Daily Express* (always first) bought up the last loose bathplug available in London and caused an inevitable delay. This dispatch must therefore rely to some extent on information sent back by other pioneers already far ahead on the road to Moscow.

Miss Smyllie, writing from Brest-Litovsk on June 30, says she soon had the Soviet frontier police officer roaring with laughter. Everybody had laughed, too, as she entered Poland. She was twenty-four hours ahead of two A.A. men who were surveying the route, and she had steak and fruit salad at a cost of fourteen shillings. The two A.A. men, telephoning from Minsk on July 1, said they had had a good meal. Mr. Hayes had Russian food with caviar; Patrol-Superintendent Humpherson had steak and chips. They had had "a completely trouble-free journey" so far—unlike Miss Smyllie who set a new all-time low for tourists by failing to fill up with petrol before entering Poland, failing to find out how to ask for it there, and when she did find out ("The magic word you must remember here is not petrol but benzine." *Collapse of elderly A.A. men*), failing to know whereabouts in the car it was supposed to go. The A.A. report ends "In convoy with two British journalists the pair set out to-day for Smolensk." Does this mean that Miss Smyllie has lost her hard-won lead, perhaps through failing to remember where the starter-button is?

That other journalist, the *Times* Correspondent, saw storks and magpies on the road between Brest-Litovsk and Minsk, but otherwise found it dull. He does not say, in his message from Minsk of July 1, what he had to eat, but he agrees that the only tourists to enter Russia so far are "an enterprising lady from the *Daily Express*; two officials of the Automobile Association . . . and your Correspondent." (He means, of course, himself, not *your* Correspondent, who is still roaring with laughter at Barnes.)

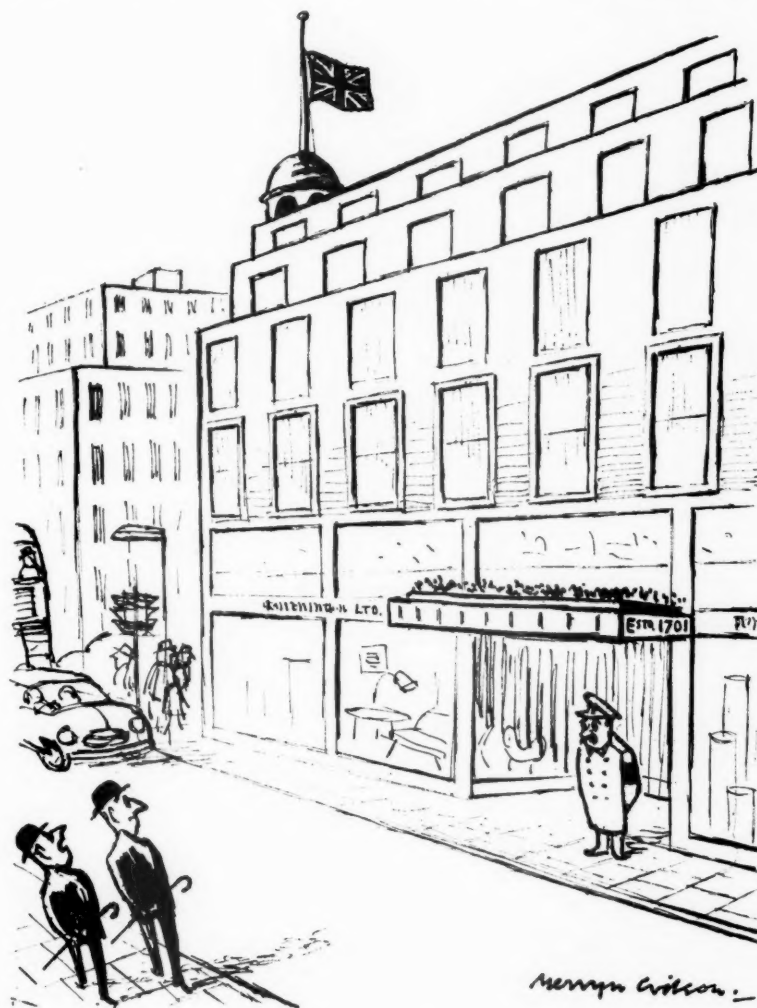
Your Correspondent feels bound to ask what the Russians will make of this first cross-section of the British nation on tour. There is a lack, so far, of

genuine down-to-earth tourists, with no bathplugs and no desire at all to be twenty-four hours ahead of anybody. One does not want the Russians to dismiss us as a nation of notetakers. It is true that the *Times* Correspondent remarks in his dispatch that "three 'British farmers' were expected at Brest-Litovsk to-day," but your own Correspondent shares the doubts which prompted the *Times* representative to put these farmers in quotes. His belief is that they will turn out to be the Correspondents of the *Daily Mail* and the *Telegraph*, with perhaps a freelance hoping to be paid eventually by the

News Chronicle or the *Herald*, or jointly. What would farmers be doing on the way to Moscow, where (according to the *Times* Correspondent) "the great road stabs through an expanse of poor land, poorly farmed," and where, save for one tractor, "no implement larger or more modern than a scythe" is to be seen by motorists?

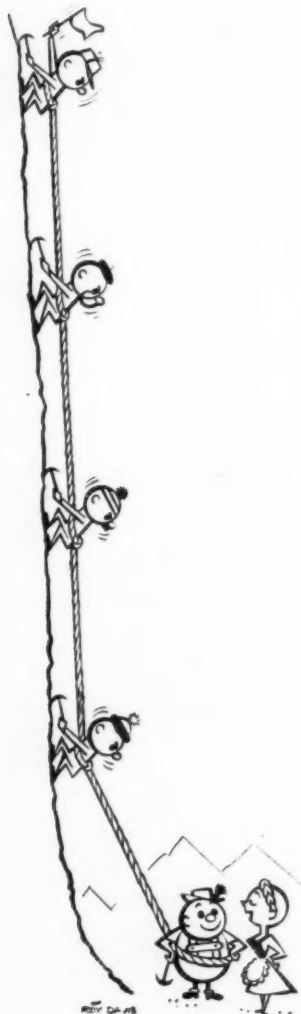
MORTLAKE, July 3rd

Your Correspondent, who is practising his driving locally while waiting for flea-powder, has had second thoughts about those three "British farmers." He now thinks it more likely that they



"Looks as if they're in a take-over bid too . . ."

will prove to be Miss Elizabeth Nicholas holidaymaking for the *Sunday Times*, and the two halves of Bon Viveur, intent on sampling soup in Smolensk; forerunners of a long line of expert tasters of local wines, and recommenders of clean and friendly little hotels. "Here I am," Miss Nicholas must surely soon be writing, "twenty-four hours ahead of Pierre d'Harcourt, in a little gem of a Russian doss-house not four hundred miles from Moscow." The Russian restaurateurs will welcome this second wave of tourists with relief. As artists in their profession they will have been a shade disappointed, your Correspondent thinks, with Miss Smyllie's uproarious delight at whatever is put before her, with Superintendent Humpherson's stolid demands for chips,



with the *Times* Correspondent's glum refusal even to make a note of the menu. Now they will have the pleasure of serving people sophisticated enough to get a couple of paragraphs out of a plate of bortsch.

There will still, however, be from the ordinary Russian's point of view an over-emphasis on notetaking. "The British tourist," *Pravda* will say in a considered article, "is keenly interested in all aspects of Soviet achievement. He, or she, loves to inspect the kitchens of our restaurants, marvels at the fingernails of our waiters, and runs from room to room in our hotels, turning the taps on and off with childish eagerness. Many questions, too, are asked about the charges for parties of up to twenty students who bring their own food and bedding."

PUTNEY, July 4th

Your Correspondent is assembling a stock of spare distilled water, said by the *Times* to evaporate quickly in batteries owing to the dry heat of Byelorussia. He fears that this further delay may mean that he will penetrate the Iron Curtain some distance behind the third wave of tourists, consisting at a guess of a "Panorama" truck and several teams of drivers testing new

models of British cars. He may even be in the wake of parties of M.P.s on goodwill missions and representatives of the Ministry of Transport reporting on Russian signposting. But he is doing his best, and will not fail to write again later when he has time.

BARNES, July 5th

Your Correspondent has given up and gone home. He advises others to do the same. He is now convinced that the eager welcome prepared by the Russians for visiting tourists will have been exhausted by those who have gone ahead to tell the tourists what to expect. The laughter aroused by Miss Smyllie will have died down. There will be no steak left; all available beds will be filled by Correspondents; the petrol pumps will be empty; the spontaneous desire of the comrades to crowd round and fraternize that so impressed the representatives of the *Express* and the *Times* will have wilted before the terror of Panorama's probing microphone; and any goodwill left over will have been cornered by M.P.s. In these circumstances your Correspondent wishes to dispose of a bottle of distilled water and a bathplug in exchange for suitable accommodation at Worthing.

Out!

By CLAUD COCKBURN

YOU go along a long while with the economic situation, and a possible capital gain or such, and spend substance on finding out what the men in charge of the City columns in the Sunday newspapers are advising you and others to do about Rhodesian copper, and, apart from all this, you are basic and patriotic. For these two reasons, you know full well that what is needed—and if you don't know this you must be not only illiterate (let yourself off the papers), deaf, (let yourself off sound radio), or blind (let yourself off TV)—is a big go-at-it in the export line.

So how many new ideas on this subject have you heard from anywhere in the last couple of years?

The answer, in case you fail to recall your past frustrations, is "None." All you know, my poor dear friend, is a lot of stuff like "export or die" and such.

It has been left to a social thinker,

reported recently in Irish newspapers, to get to the heart of the matter. Because what this man and his progressive and religious associates said was that the whisky distillers were dragging their feet about what could be done about sales to the U.S.A. (the whole thing followed the world Trade Fair which just closed in New York)—was that their trouble was that all they were thinking of was the profit—a subject and object boring to distillers. You cannot, said this thinker—this man with the really new idea—expect a distiller to do much about export unless you can offer him something a bit less squalid than mere, sheer, profit.

To be a keen exporter a keen man needs a little something more elevated. And to this this thinker we are now quoting supplied the answer we are all looking for. He stated, for public quotation, that it is the duty of, for example, Irish distillers to export more



"Hey! Your majesty!"

and more whisky to the U.S. because of "the benefits which will thus result to the Temperance Movement in Ireland." The suggestion was also made—and who can deny it?—that if 90 per cent of every gallon of whisky produced in Ireland could be shot into Kansas before a native could get so much as a smell of it, the native would not only be a soberer man than he might otherwise have been but would spend the money he might otherwise have unwisely spent on whisky on radio appliances and such, bringing employment and prosperity to our land.

Heard of trails? Heard of blazing? Well then, what have we here? Talk about incentive. If a Billy Graham or someone could be sent to Glasgow and persuade some of those fellows that they can alleviate the boredom of just making money by bringing—if they can unload the whole product on the North Americans—total abstinence to the

population of Britain, there would not only be a big look-up all round, more or less neo-Elizabethan with accent on the "neo," but a lot of men rushing out of the saloon bar to put the money in the municipal loan.

While the whole thing is an idea it's admittedly a limited one and needs to be taken a good deal further. As, for instance, women.

Nobody in his senses denies that there are too many women in Britain. Nobody has yet proffered a sensible notion of what to do with them. Yet here they are, at some points offering temptation to the young, at others cluttering our hard-pressed divorce courts, at yet others occasioning the awful boredom of the Sunday newspapers, and at almost all times causing either worry or expense to normal-minded men.

They should be exported.

Some potential exporter, who has not

bothered to study the special needs of the American market, will at this point, no doubt, object that he "cannot see a profitable demand for English women in Chicago" or Denver or wherever it may be. This is the kind of argument which is not only losing Britain a profitable dollar-earning source of revenue but also shows a lack of adaptability. Given adequate study of consumer demand in the United States—and it must always be remembered that the road is usually both longer and broader than it is here—there is no reason why English models should not compete successfully in that market.

By flooding the American market with British whisky and women we shall achieve not only a sober and restrained life for the British, who will be deprived of both these products, but may do something to lower the awful and menacing productivity of the all-too-abstemious Americans.

I Fell Over the Wall

By FRANK SHAW

CHASTITY may have suited some and poverty others, but of all the rules we novices at the Jesuit seminary had to obey before we took our vows none suited me more than the silence. Of course it was not absolute, for superiors had to give us instructions, and one might sometimes have to address a fellow—when pidgin Latin must be used, "*Visne passare salem?*"—after sign language had failed. And you could speak to the novice who left the chapel at the same time as yourself at the two daily breaks spent in the grounds or the novices' hall. There were other occasions, for the wise superiors know that for healthy young men in unnatural surroundings, as for girls in finishing schools and soldiers in barracks, hysteria is near the surface and must be prevented.

But I did not want to talk. The silence was very welcome to me, coming from a crowded home where my father and big brothers, all unemployed, talked nineteen to the dozen all day. And I was very self-conscious that, whether it be Latin or English, I had a decided Liverpool accent and my fellow-novices did not—even the Canadians and Irish—show signs of their origins, though they were not all by any means from "posh" homes.

Most of the others, panting for grace-bringing humiliations, would probably have envied me, but there is a very Anglican strain in me and I had no desire for additional penances.

Which showed that I was not really suited to the religious life.

When, for instance, on the second day Brother Brierley, a fellow novice appointed to look after me (which included carrying tales, I was aghast to learn), gave me my gown he also gave me a P-shaped pocket-sized abacus which was intended to help me make my daily account of sins and failings—it had scarcely enough beads, was my first reaction—and a discipline. It was not a very formidable thing and I was a big strong fellow. But I could never bring myself to use it, though I have heard neighbours in adjoining cubicles doing so at night just before I dropped off into a graceless sleep. And in the morning, when for example I caught their eyes at the pre-Mass meditation, I was the one who blushed. Really we were not supposed to catch eyes or touch one another—a rule I found particularly trying as a full-back at the occasional game of football when confronted by tricky forwards.

I dreaded, therefore, in my unregenerate shrinking from humiliation, the duty of reading from the *Martyrology* or *De Monumenta Historia* from a pulpit over the refectory when even the tiniest false quantity could send the whole assembly, from the oldest professed priest to the youngest neophyte, into deep basso chuckles and high-pitched giggles.

As for speaking to fellow-novices on non-secular subjects when, on outdoor excursions and such times, that was permitted, I dreaded them with their tony accents, and in any case I could never think of a subject.

There was the Novices' Sermon. The Prefect of Studies stopped me one day and told me I was to prepare a little sermon for delivery to my brother novices at "rec" one evening, and I practised assiduously both matter and manner for a fortnight. Then, when the big evening came, in my best effort to be posh and tony myself, I announced the subject Pride and delivered the first few words which the Prefect himself had given me—"As Pride was the first sin, so it is the source and origin of all sin"—in tones Forbes Robertson could not have equalled, I felt sure; and of course it set the gathered brothers off in tumults of laughter. Later I came to know that the subject and the first few words were always the same and that generations of trainee Jesuits had listened to those words and found them an excuse to let the air out of their lungs.

Heartiest laughter was of course my adjutor. He did it for my own good, I fully realized, but this was not the first time I had felt that there was much of the school sneak about that plump, pink-faced, goggle-eyed Brother Brierley, and that he got some personal kick too out of detecting—and reporting—my failures on the path.

It is strange that when I did speak freely—of course to my own fellow-Liverpudlians—disaster followed. There were two occasions.

One was a special feast day when at meals we were allowed wine in addition to the customary weak beer or cider. Many were abstainers and I consumed



their wine as well as my own. As a special treat, after dinner, we were allowed to join the juniors, who had taken minor vows and wore dog collars.

One of these, a lean sardonic type, had been a prefect at my Liverpool day-school where he had once tried to enrol us younger fellows in a false religion. He was delighted to see me and I wondered at his presence in the seminary—and his having stayed already four years—almost as much as I wondered at my own. He is now a Professor of Moral Theology in Rome.

At a tinny piano one of the novices was playing selections from Gilbert and Sullivan, and after we had exchanged reminiscences of the old school my friend and I hummed special and quite unsuitable versions of the words in what we thought were low tones and I saw Brierley looking sharply at us both. Then, like a pearly king and his donah on a bank holiday, my friend and I exchanged birettas...

We novices were a grade below the juniors and they were supposed to set us a good example. So I have no doubt my friend had a stormy interview with the Prefect next day. I only know that I had all the most difficult outdoor jobs for a fortnight.

The grade below us, to whom we had to set a good example, was the lay brotherhood, and for that purpose two of us Marys had to visit these Marthas each night to give them, over the post-dinner rec., the benefit of our pious conversation.

When my turn came Brother Brierley was the other one.

The brothers sat, eyes down, arms



"For instance, the moment she knew I was against H-bombs she was all for them."

in sleeves, in a minstrel circle round their hall and Brierley soon inserted himself among two brothers and started. I paused and a burly brother twitched his gown and I sat between him and a thin, white-haired fellow who looked like a bookie's runner. The thin fellow at once claimed that he knew me and recalled that a couple of years before, as an amateur, I had appeared in a Liverpool boxing tournament. His horrible Liverpool nasalities delighted me but I knew I had not come there to talk about boxing so I made some reference to St. Thomas Aquinas or the Little Flower.

"Can you fight?" asked the burly brother.

"Can he fight?" snorted the other. "He knocked them down like skittles."

"I'm more for skience meself," said his companion—an East Ender, I fancied. He stood and pulled me up after him. "Counter this," he said. He threw one towards my jaw and I rode it easily and he dodged my return.

"Fancy stuff!" sneered the bookie's runner. "You couldn't knock the skin off a rice pudding."

All the brothers were standing now. I could not see Brierley and, in any case, I was not thinking of him.

The East Ender aimed another and it would have missed me if the little fellow had not tripped me so that it caught me on the left eye and made it water. I lashed out wildly and now the little fellow pushed his big friend so that my blow caught him fully on the side of the head and he gave me one back which sent me flying towards the door of the hall as it opened and in came Brierley followed by the gaunt and thoroughly shocked Prefect of Studies.

On the bus to the station, clutching my single ticket from Euston to Lime Street, I read a Wodehouse story in a magazine—my first secular reading for months—puffed a dried-up cigarette which had been concealed on my person, like a Nazi's capsule of cyanide, for months, and while all around me talked I never said a word.

Women and Children First

"Fifty-one girls of the Manor Park County Secondary Girls' School, accompanied by the headmistress, and two members of staff, visited the Royal Tournament at Earls Court last week. The Queen, Prince Philip and the Duke of Cornwall were also present."

Aldershot News



A New English Bestiary

By G. W. STONIER

THE Fox is a sportsman. He prefers to be hunted, otherwise he would die of boredom.

Politicians and generals have found in him a model of slyness, and queens do not disdain to wear him about their necks.



He himself hunts rabbits (q.v.); only when these are unobtainable will he turn to poultry or game from which, like a good poacher, he bites off the head. Grapes are his weakness, and seeking these, and never finding them sweet enough, he will spoil whole vineyards. He likes playing at Fox and Geese.

From time to time he may be observed walking slowly backwards into a pond till his tail touches a floating log, on which his fleas will embark, leaving him clean.

Yet he stinks.

This should not prevent any young lady, hoping to be presented at Court, from first being "blooded," a most necessary baptism.

The LION is King of Beasts, and naturally British. No animal could be more noble, brave, debonair or admirable, and he should only be pursued by those worthy of him, preferably after losses at cards or an unhappy love-affair. His head, mounted, will give the finishing touch to any sitting-room, where port should be drunk of an equal tawtness. The social lion is still seen and heard. The red lion, indigenous to these isles, finds commemoration in a thousand inn-signs.

When he dies bees hive in his stomach. We are warned against plucking the beard of a dead lion, because other lions are sure to be looking.

The CAMEL hypocritically kneels.

He is a cynical, debauched creature, rotten with disease, and much addicted to spitting and to a marital backwardness that has given rise to some speculation.

No wonder a straw will break him.

But in the desert he has proved himself a most trusty steed, capable of living almost indefinitely on his hump (two humps, if a dromedary), and anyone attacked by Bedouins will find him an invaluable sandbag.

There are no wild camels, though some dance.

The coat is greatly prized by theatrical agents.

The HEDGEHOG pricks dogs' noses, eats insects, milks cows in the fields at night, and eventually gets run over, but should preferably be baked in clay, when he will taste better than chicken.

The SWAN belongs to the Crown and



to Ballet. He sings before he dies, but do not throw stones at him, because he can break a man's leg with one sweep of his wing. There is no ornament more necessary for those possessing lakes.

Virgins, with the example of Leda, should perhaps beware of him, as also of unicorns (q.v.).

SQUIRRELS must be distinguished as good or bad. The bad is grey and not a squirrel at all but a tree-rat and should be treated as such. The red is charming and roguish and as native as autumn, especially when busy laying by for a rainy day.

So vicious is the RAT that he will attack a man. But he is really a coward. He will leave a sinking ship when it is his obvious duty to remain. His love of plague, pestilence, and famine make

him singularly undesirable. Poison is too good for him. He will make sport with ferrets or terriers; but a large sticky-paper has been found best, since it both infuriates the rat and delights the spectator, for whom such pleasures are hard come by.

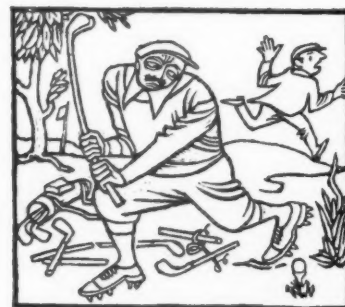
The TIGER, a treacherous Eastern animal, lurks in trees and thickets, burns bright at night, but should be shot by daylight from an elephant and his skin brought back to Earl's Court as the foundation for a love-life.

The ELEPHANT, like Mr. T. S. Eliot, is born old and—some aver—wise. He has no equal at stacking teak or making a Durbar go. He will step over a baby in the street, and never forget. Do not therefore, at the Zoo, hand him an Irish shilling. His tusks are extracted to make little elephant sets for the hall mantelpiece, without which burglars would find many a home hardly worth entering.

No EARWIG is quite happy till he has found an ear to lodge in, and this should be guarded against.

MONKEYS are naturally wicked, like foreigners, and should not be encouraged.

The GOLFER propels a white pillule over chosen ground, and after trying to bury it eighteen times, drowns himself in the nineteenth hole. His fierce cries



and broken clubs are a warning to all who may venture near.

At one time he was attended by a parasite, the caddy, now almost extinct.

The CROCODILE weeps as he devours a man—a sensibility much admired in

high circles—but prefers blondes; whom, however, he never quite catches, because (as we have learnt from films) the blonde is as apt at being rescued as at provoking interest.

She is quite distinct from the Crocodile bird, a species of crow which sits on the crocodile's nose and picks his teeth after he has returned to his sad, lonely supper.

The ANT was hard-working, virtuous, and an example to us all till he turned Communist; since when he has sought to spread his pernicious doctrine everywhere. There are Argentine Red Ants in Eastbourne.

Some think that this is the beginning of the end, that he will conquer the earth: a threat made more alarming by the possibility that radioactivity may produce a race of ants ten feet high.

In the fording of rivers, the cultivation of mushrooms, and sex-determination by diet he shows misguided but undoubted ability.

COOTS, always bald and often mad, spend their time scooting from lily-pad to lily-pad and hooting incessantly.

SNAKES are to be looked for in grass or on bell-ropes in bedrooms where flute-music has been heard, and the only defence against them is a mongoose, who should be one's constant companion, especially at week-ends.

The BULL is very dangerous: avoid in fields or china-shops; don't wave red



flags at, but in a crisis take by the horns. When enormously fat, may be paraded at cattle-shows. But always beware of. (Europa.) His nature is largely explained by Cow (q.v.).

An old TROUT loves to be tickled.

The DOG is man's best friend, after his mother.

It was not always so. Time was when dogs were an uncouth breed, brawling on corners, snatching joints, and howling at the moon. Often they would go mad and run shrieking through the streets, to bite some inoffensive passer-by who, unless he could seize and swallow a hair of the rabid monster, would instantly die.

Now any dog would be grateful if a man bit him, because he would get in the news. Like all who live in these islands, he has grown up in the school of Games and Character.

He leads the blind, stops the thief, fetches the partridge or the newspaper, rounds up sheep, collects for good causes in railway stations, snatches children from fire or drowning, hates Wagner, stands up for *God Save the Queen*, and dies for his country.

The tales of his devotion are endless.



Into a Drury Lane pub stepped a journalist at opening time, as journalists will, followed immediately by a large mottled hound. He—the cold-nosed one—was served with a bowl of stout, which he drank off and departed. "Done that," said the landlord, "ever since his master's death—a good customer of ours"; and went on to relate, as he measured out the journalist's whisky, that pursuing another of his late master's habits he would be found calling at Bow Street police station in the morning.

What indeed can the dog not do?

He cannot tell a lie.

He will not eat dog, and would shun horse if it lay with him.

Most of his faults—including sex habits—may be put down to environment. There is no more law-abiding citizen. This should not blind us to his rights. The day cannot be far off when

he will be free to choose his own way of life, and rumour has it that a National Home will be found for him in the Isle of Dogs. Truly then may it be said, Every dog shall have his day.

Down, Rollo.

The CHAR, a common amphibian, emerging from scrub and football pools,



IONICUS

snorts when surprised, sniffs, scruffs, sweeps out, and leaves a char-trail of dropped pins, brooms, and aitches.

The soft curves of the CAT are deceptive, for she is hard, cruel, and capricious, having little or no sense of responsibility. Many Englishmen cannot bear to touch a cat, or remain in the room with one.

They are always up to something, playing with mice they catch or pretending a bird is a mouse, going out on the tiles to howl horribly (and little knowing that from *cat-gut* human ingenuity has evolved the G string), dancing on hot bricks, running up trees so as to disorganize the Fire Service, and in a variety of ways risking another of those nine lives with which nature has unaccountably endowed them.

They need a good swinging, but in modern rooms this is often not possible.

Still, with their airs and furs and sphinx-like inscrutability, they are beautiful—some of them; and these are the most deceitful of all.

When it rains cats and dogs (*cf.* frog showers) we may be sure a cat started it.

Under water the SHARK may be kept at bay by letting out a yell and a stream of bubbles, but in the City he is less timid, and one snap of his terrible jaws will easily dispose of bull, bear, or ass.

Compare the PONGO, amphibian of Sicily, half shark and half tiger, who will make a meal off sixty men.

Beloved Rogue

By ALEX ATKINSON

NO ordinary vagabond lurking wet in a hedge-bottom or sorting out his jemmies in a sleazy tenement, he prepared for the coup unflustered and sweet-smelling, high above the Park in an airy maisonette decked with Dufys and a wrought-iron hat-stand. His painted wife was pleased to help, handing studs, white tie, the simple gadgets of the trade: no cosh, no skeleton key, no striped jersey, not even a mask or deadly flick-knife. (Was he afraid of violence? Would he have scaled walls, grabbed hundredweights of sable, grappled with night-watchmen, struck down constables, fired bullets from a '38, gone half-down fighting, escaped then with the swag to tell the tale to fences? The point is moot, but violence was not called for in his chosen line. All was suave, controlled, inevitable: the whispered word aside, the wink, the pay-off; and not a hair out of place, no anxious waiting by his mate for the law's measured tread in the wee small hours.)

As dusk deepened she wished him luck (but casually: this was routine, a job devoid of glamour) and closed the door upon him, and moved to a plushy chesterfield to idle the time (not long: an hour or two) with dark sherry and a costly telly set, all among the charming loot of years, the fitted carpeting, the chandelier, the uncut Marcel Proust, the central heat.

The spruced malefactor now hailed openly a taxi in the busy street. For him no bullet-proof sedan with suspect number-plates, no slinking down dark ways with collar turned up to the nose: all was pleasant and gracious, his progress nowhere aroused suspicion, but drew now and then a shy salute from some humble keeper-to-the-narrow-path who recognized the face, admired the reputation, envied the loot but did not hate the method, little guessing. For he was known, the rogue, strangely adored by those whom regularly he plundered. A great one, belonging to a mystic world far above the world of slogging up to 'Town on the bulged eight-five to earn a wage to pay the mortgage to keep the rain off H.P. chairs to rest the weary limbs hacked and bruised returning on the six-one. Oh, he was to be loved, for he brought balm to them, he could do amusing things to make them clasp their hands together, and his face (touched up) tempted them in the dailies to purchase alcoholic drinks or nostrums for the belly-ache, which they did.

Therefore, he had no fear, approaching in state the scene of crime. He made an entrance, the storied restaurant bowed to him, acolytes in soft-hued livery touched forelocks to the new aristocracy (would the squire like a rose-cheeked daughter for the night?), around the bars and lounges discreet fingers pointed out his eminence, lifts

emptied for him, surged up unjolting, and no half-crown for the attendants either.

So here in gaudy banquet-room (ballroom handily adjoining) were gathered, with wives and sweethearts gaily dressed for dancing, the still half-sober gentlemen of commerce—hard-headed, up to every trick, simple, thin-eyed, ambitious—using an evening out of their year of evenings to hear puns re sales figures from Chief Clerk, Works Overseer, Sales Manager: to be civilized in eating together, toasting the Queen, being sure not to miss the Gay Gordons. And prompt, unruffled, recognized, worshipped with sidelong looks by maid and matron, the rogue is met five exact minutes before cabaret time, by the M.C. (a specially chosen travelled salesman, well up in all these things), handed without ado a medium-sweet champagne to soothe him after his nerve-wracking journey to be here so very kindly among ordinary folk, and thanked for condescending to beguile them in actual person, such a busy man.

He glances lazily about, sipping, smiling if they come too close and smile, hoping to touch him. He is not above conversation with the M.C., from the corner of his mouth. The agreed particular snack in private is prepared, the wine on ice? (Oh, yes.) The orchestra is aware of the necessity for absolute quiet during the recital of four cosily-naughty jokes which everybody has heard before told better in a saloon-bar a-wash with bitter on a Sunday lunch-time? (Oh, yes.) All concerned appreciate the impossibility of giving autographs at such a time, one's life being one long uphill toil? (They do, regretfully.) Five minutes precisely are the agreed working hours, not counting naturally the three minutes of uncontrollable opening applause while one lets them actually see one, or the closing acclamation, or the time taken to elbow one's blasted way out of the blasted crush? (Five minutes, yes. How wonderful!) It is understood that one does not expect a fee of any kind, sort or description for appearing at this function? (It is.) That one is only too glad that these poor hard-working stiff should have an opportunity to admire one's haircut and one's teeth? (Yes, yes,





"Why, Mr. Moskitch, I thought we said good-bye at the Polish frontier."

and what a noble deed!) It is further understood that all one will require is eighty pounds for out-of-pocket expenses? (Yes.) In, not to put too fine a point on it, hard folding money? (It is understood.) Before I move from this spot? (Yes.) Well then, don't hang about—where is it?

Ah, the gay scene of revelry by night! Charming ladies, handsome executives, popping corks, a background of Strauss, drifts of cigar smoke, and in a sheltered corner, sophisticated burglary while you wait.

Out now of all possible danger (for none come forward to punch him about the head, there is no shrilling of police whistles) he secretes thin oblong sheets of finely-printed swag in this pocket and that, winking with charm at a passing grateful wife, and moves forward, at a nod from the orchestra leader, to lay himself once more, gratis and unprotected, at their adoring feet.

From the Great Western

THESE small West-Country towns where year by year Newly elected mayors oppose reforms Their last year's Worships promised—down the roads Large detached houses, Croydons of the West, Blister in summer heat; striped awnings hang Over front doors, and those geraniums Retired tradesmen love to cultivate Blaze in the gravel. From more furtive streets Unmarried mothers leave for London. Girls Who had such promise suddenly lose their looks. Small businesses go bankrupt. Corners once Familiar for a shuttered toll-gate house Are smoothed away to make amenities. The copper beech, the bunchy sycamore And churchyard limes are felled. Among their stumps The almond tree shall flourish. Corn Exchange— On with the Poultry Show!—and Cemet'ry, With your twin chapels, safely gather in Church and dissent from small West-Country towns Where year by year Newly elected mayors oppose reforms.

JOHN BETJEMAN

The Man who Said "Jiminy Cricket!"

By WALTER ALLEN

IF Flight 502, air coach from San Francisco to Boston, calling at Oakland, Salt Lake City, Denver, Omaha, Chicago and Hartford, Conn., had not been grounded at Omaha with engine trouble I should not have met the man who said "Jiminy Cricket!" I don't pretend the encounter was wholly adequate compensation for having to pound Midway Airport, Chicago, for ten hours, but at least the day was more temperate, as Ezra Pound has said, because this beauty had been.

Midway at any hour of the day and night is like Waterloo Station at the height of the bank holiday rush: splendid if you like crowds. There are, however, differences: half the men at Midway seem to be wearing ten-gallon hats and the other half carry aluminium walking sticks, and that I don't understand. And then at Midway you can't get a drink. By a drink I mean a drink: you can get enough milk, coffee, orange

juice and so on to float the entire U.S. Navy. But a drink, something with gin in it, or rye or bourbon or Scotch, simply isn't there.

"But if you had all that time to kill, why didn't you go to the Loop?" The point is well taken. But one of the conveniences of air travel—it's where the saving of time, as compared with traditional modes of transport, comes

in—is that airports are always many miles away from the cities whose names they take. Midway is farther from its city than most. According to the timetable the airport limousine—in the United States the bus that plies back and forth between city and airport is always called a limousine—takes sixty minutes to travel between Midway and the Palmer House Hotel. But this information has beside it the sinister sign (k), which means, add fifteen minutes for rush hour. In Chicago the hour is always rush.

"Well, I can see that two and a half hours in a bus is a bit much, but you did say you had ten hours . . ." Now, if I may say so, your point is *not* well taken. You merely show your ignorance of the ways of airlines. For when Flight 502, air coach from San Francisco to Boston, failed to arrive at 9.45 you are not to think we were immediately advised of the delay. We kicked our heels in hope, and it was not until 10.30 that we, the passengers on this inauspicious flight, were chivvied into a relatively sequestered corner of the airport and informed that the plane had been assailed by engine trouble at Omaha. The airline apologized; it craved our sympathy, our tolerance and



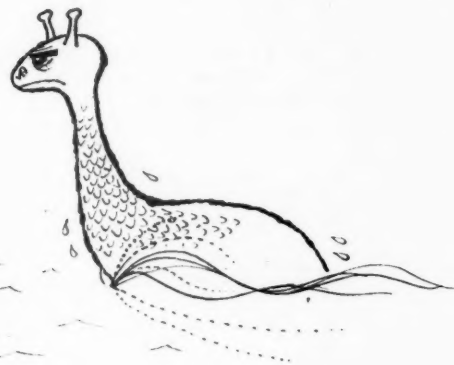
our forbearance, pointing out that in any case there was no other flight to Boston until the evening. Flight 502 would leave Midway at 2 p.m.

You see: three and a half hours. It would have meant a mere half-hour at the Loop, and that is no way to insult a great city. The island race, however, is not readily beaten, and in the street outside the airport there are two cocktail bars very much in evidence. The going is not easy, for in that particular corner of a foreign field the traffic hurls itself at the pedestrian with a fury unsurpassed anywhere in the world except possibly in Rome, Italy. The thing to do is what I did: wait until you can join up with a convoy of other thirsty men and in the destructive element immerse yourselves together.

I went back to Midway at 1.30. At 2.45 we were again lured into a corner of the airport; and now the airline wasn't bothering to apologize: Flight 502 would leave for Hartford, Conn., and Boston at 5.30: take it or leave it. This made some of my fellow-passengers frankly cross. What guarantee was there, one asked, that Flight 502 *would* leave at 5.30? Another guessed he'd have done better to have gotten a train in the first place and hazarded the opinion that next time he would do exactly that.

It was about an hour after this that I met the man who said "Jiminy Cricket!" A fresh consignment of newspapers had arrived at the news-stand, and though by this time I had read so many papers that I could have taken a pretty comprehensive exam on the politics, crime, culture, social life and financial position of the city of Chicago and the State of Illinois, there seemed some faint chance I'd find in yet another paper some morsel of news I'd not met before. I went over to the stand and bumped into a man. We drew back with mutual apologies. "Jiminy Cricket!" he said. "It sure is crowded here." "I beg your pardon?" I said. "Jiminy Cricket!" he bawled above the din of the planes, the dance music on the public address system and the announcements being broadcast simultaneously by the spokesmen of United Airlines, Eastern Airlines and North-Western Airlines—"Jiminy Cricket! It sure is crowded here."

With one accord, we edged away in order to exploit this promising opening.



I was delighted, both to have met someone outside a comic strip who actually said "Jiminy Cricket" and to have found someone to talk to me. I have to face it, I am not the sort of man strangers talk to. In England I don't expect it and would be pretty indignant if they so much as tried, but America, one feels, is different. Yet even New York taxi-drivers, a notoriously loquacious race, take one look at my forbidding dial and shut their traps for good.

"Jiminy Cricket!" he said again. "It sure is one hell of a place."

"Chicago?" I asked.

"Chicago," he said.

"You live in Chicago?"

"Jiminy Cricket, no! I live in Seattle."

Then he said what still seems to me a very astonishing thing. "*Parlez-vous Français?*" Or should I *fermer ma bouche?*"

Dazed at this, I replied "Oh no, I'm not French; I'm English."

"Jiminy Cricket," he said, "you're English?"

I agreed. He pondered this. "My mother's French," he said at last. "She learnt me that French I just said."

I congratulated him on his knowledge of the tongue. But his mind was now elsewhere. "You English!" he said. "Jiminy Cricket! What you wanna have a queen for?"

I explained that in England we always had had queens and such.

"But all that dough they cost!" he

said. I replied it was a pity to spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar.

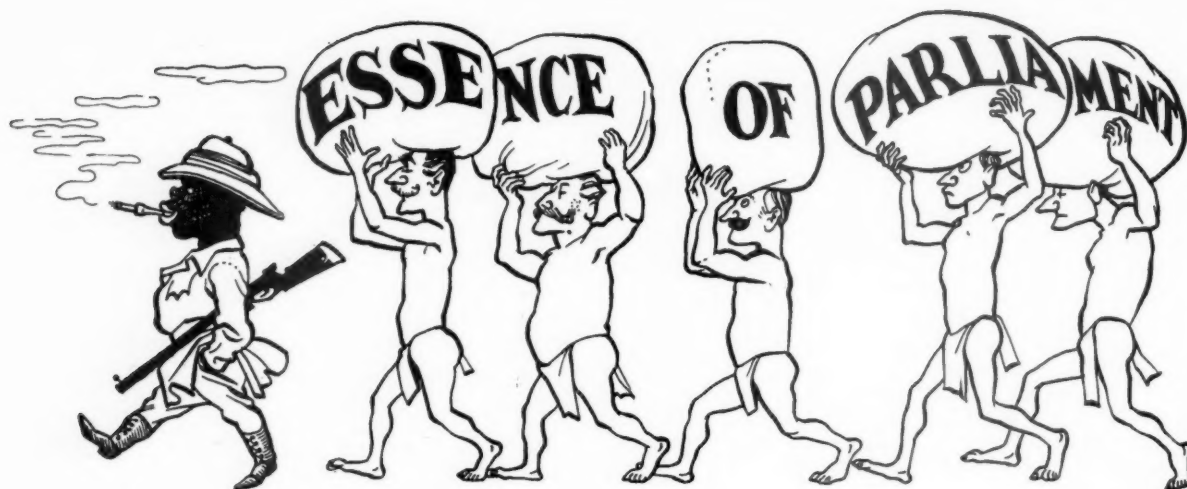
"And not letting you do what you like," he said. "Jiminy Cricket!"

There seemed here some lack of comprehension of the role of the monarch in England. I assured him the Queen would not think of preventing her subjects doing what they liked.

"I been in Canada," he said, "and, Jiminy Cricket, it's dead on Sunday. The Queen, she won't allow anything to happen on Sunday. Now the way I figure it, when a guy's been to church in the morning he ought to be allowed to do what he likes the rest of the day. But the Queen don't allow it in Canada."

It was very unpromising. With some adroitness I switched the conversation to the subject of Seattle. But all good statistics come to an end, and there came a point when I heard him say the great thing about flying it was so fast, it saved you so much time. I told him I thought I'd just heard the name and number of his flight being announced on the loud-speaker; and as he moved over to the information board I made a dash for that cocktail bar.

Flight 502, air coach from San Francisco to Boston, left Chicago at 5.30. It was snowing when we reached Boston. The snowstorm became a blizzard. Flight 502 was the last aeroplane to put down at Boston for thirty-six hours. Wasn't I lucky? I might have spent another day and a half pounding the concrete of Midway. Come to think of it, I might have met another man who said "Jiminy Cricket!"



IT is very difficult to make out what the House of Commons is for these days. If there is an Imperial issue, it is for the Commonwealth Conference. If it is H-bombs, there is the Disarmament Conference. Trade Unionists and employers agree that industrial relations can only be prejudiced by discussion on the floor of the

House. Freight charges are up and coal is up. The House is told but not consulted. And when a subject is discussed, what comes of the discussion? Mr. Wade thought it very wrong that building societies should pay profits tax. Everyone seemed to agree with him. For the Conservatives spoke Mr. Black and Mr. Nigel Fisher, who announced that he would not be able to support the Government in the lobby if it refused the concession. Mr. Harold Wilson for the Socialists, singing a very different song from that which Mr. Bevan sang some years ago when he denounced building society shareholders as usurious money-lenders, thought them the nicest sort of capitalists. Sir Herbert Butcher, most loyal of Government supporters, and Sir Lancelot Joynson-Hicks said that the House was united in support of the concession.

Here, an unsophisticated visitor from Mars might think, was a real political crisis. The division would be called. Members of all parties would flock into the lobby to record their votes against the Government. It would go down to inevitable, overwhelming, humiliating defeat. What did happen? Mr. Thorneycroft had not been present throughout the denunciation of his policy. He came in at the end of the debate. A quick word with Mr. Powell to hear what it was all about—an easy laugh—then he rose. The clause in its wider form, he said, could not in any event be accepted. There was a narrower point which might possibly be considered. He saw formidable difficulties

in it. He would make no promise that anything at all could be done, but he would consider it, and, odd as it may seem, such a reply was thought entirely satisfactory by those who a few minutes before had been announcing their readiness to go to the stake sooner than accept the Government's policy, and Mr. Wade's clause was by leave withdrawn without a division.

The Finance Bill which had come in like a lion went out like a lamb, with Mr. Glenvil Hall pleading for the removal of purchase tax on accordions and Mr. Scholefield Allen, Socialist Member for Crewe, pleading for its removal on Rolls Royces. He argued that it was to the advantage of the workers that the rich should buy more Rolls Royces—which they would if there was not a purchase tax. On that argument, said Mr. Ingress Bell, the Socialists ought to have voted for the reduction of surtax.

At Question-time things are a trifle better because there is no chance of the business being reduced to a farce by "the acid test of the division lobby." The House this week has been most interested in art. It started with Mr. Hector Hughes's demand that the Lane pictures be returned to Dublin. There is a great deal to be said for returning the Lane pictures to Dublin, but the fault, if fault there is, has been the fault of every Government for the last forty years. So it was a mistake for Mr. Hughes to speak of "the unscrupulous dishonesty of the Government." By doing so he both earned for himself



the rebuke of the Speaker and lessened his chance of achieving his purpose. More skilful were the tactics of Mr. Kenneth Robinson about the St. James's Theatre. No Member of Parliament deserves better of his fellow citizens than Mr. Robinson for his unceasing warfare against the destruction of the nation's beauty. Mr. Henry Brooke's case against stopping the demolition was that leave to demolish was given in 1954, that perhaps then somebody "slipped up a bit," but that to revoke that leave now at the last moment would involve the taxpayer in the payment of heavy compensation. "How much?" asked Mr. Stokes. Mr. Brooke could not say but thought about £50,000. "I do not call that anything," said Mr. Stokes. Mr. Nabarro, thinking how much smoke he could abate for half that sum, for the first time in his life looked shocked. Mr. Herbert Morrison intervened with the quaint suggestion that the London County Council was likely to keep in mind "the true interests of London artistically and otherwise," and did not want the Government to interfere. There is a great deal to be said for

allowing responsibility to local authorities, but anyone who thinks that the London County Council is a safe guardian of the artistic treasures of London will think anything. It is also true, as Mr. Brooke argued, that the question of demolition of the theatre would never have arisen if the owners had not offered it for demolition. There is indeed a certain room for argument about who it is who is proposing to kill Cock Robin. But the fact is that Cock Robin is not yet quite dead. A healthy society would, it is true, knock down plenty of old buildings, but it would put significant new buildings in their place. What is so depressing about modern London is this constant destruction of the old in order to build rubbish on the foundations of its rubble. Is it even yet too late to save it? If the price is £50,000 and sacking the London County Council, let us with tears in our eyes be prepared to pay it. Could not we even raise £50,000 by sending the hat round? Or by a judicious flutter with Ernie?

Speaking of Ernie, it is just three hundred years since Cromwell passed his Act appointing a Postmaster-General. No one can quarrel with Mr. Marples' kindly gesture in entertaining to luncheon his eight surviving predecessors—Lord Samuel, Lord Attlee, the Speaker, Lord Listowel, Mr. Ness Edwards, Lord Crookshank and Mr. Paling. Yet there is an ominous appropriateness about the centenary, for anyone who imagines that Cromwell's purpose in creating the post was to make it easier for law-abiding citizens to communicate with one another is most gravely in error. The duty of the Postmaster-General was rather, runs the creating Act, to prevent "many dangerous and wicked designs which have been and are daily contrived against the peace and welfare of this Commonwealth, the intelligence of which cannot well be communicated except by letter of escript." The Postmaster-General was indeed in origin the chief Government spy.

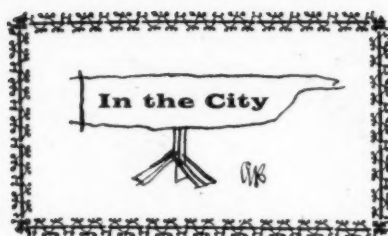
Poor dears, at last they have got their wages put up. If Members of Parliament had put themselves at the head of the queue for a wage-rise, as at one time they seemed inclined to do, that would indeed have been intolerable. But now since they are well down the queue no one can grudge them their adjustment.



But it is as well to understand what the adjustment means. One may argue that there ought to be less legislation, that Members ought not to be whole-time Members, that it is Parliament's duty to prevent inflation, but of course it is only fair to face the fact that the ordinary Member of Parliament has no means whatsoever of seeing to it that there is less legislation or of preventing inflation. Therefore, since he cannot prevent the situation being as it is, it is only fair to give him the wages to live in the present situation. But of course it is important to see what that recognition means. It means the final recognition that the House of Commons has in fact no control whatsoever over financial policy—the final recognition that nobody has any serious intention of stopping inflation, and that the formula henceforward for all conditions of men is "All hands to the till."

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS





Geo-economic Year

THE economic expression "terms of trade" (for once in a way there is no suspicion of jargon) means quite simply the rate of exchange between primary goods—foodstuffs and raw materials—and manufactured goods. All countries, especially those which live by swapping exports for imports, are at the mercy of the terms of trade for their livelihood: if the rate moves against them they get less from overseas, if it favours them they get more without additional effort.

Throughout the nineteenth century the terms of trade ran for Britain, and as a pioneer among industrial nations we were able to make hay, much grain, timber and profit by exporting our cottons, machines, pots and pans to a world clamouring for tools, hardware and clothing. We were a most-favoured nation.

Inevitably the good times came to an end. As other countries equipped themselves with mills and factories and engineering shops we lost our monopoly, competition among manufacturing nations became fierce, and the terms of trade moved against us. It seemed then that the process of devaluation would be steady and continuous—more mouths to feed all over the world, the machines churning out durable goods much faster than nature could increase its yield of food and raw materials, the emergence of so-called backward peoples as tough bargainers—and Britain would become poorer, an over-specialized misfit in a world stuffed with manufactures and short of food.

Well, in the long run this might still be the picture, but in recent years, to the amazement of most economists, the old nineteenth-century pattern of trade has emerged again. The terms of trade have swung back to our advantage. Why? Because the world's natural resources and national production have expanded prodigiously with the application of scientific and technical know-how, because every country has developed an enormous appetite for capital goods, consumer durables and machine-made luxury articles, and to some extent

because the output of industrial countries has been restricted by monetary troubles, by fears of galloping inflation, by restorative bouts of deflation and the credit squeeze.

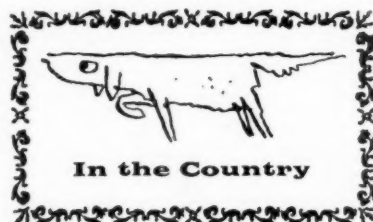
In a sane world, perhaps, the "have" countries would be pumping capital equipment into the underdeveloped lands as rapidly as possible: instead, they all seem to have decided to cash in themselves on the good times and so widen the gulf between standards of living in industrial and peasant communities. The decision is not of course the result of conscious planning; it is the outcome of social revolution, a worker's revolution made possible by the free-for-all competitive struggle of western democracy.

This is Communism's chance, and all the signs are that in Russia and China the planners are making the most of it. In Britain (according to the *United Nations' World Economic Survey* for 1956) national output increased by only

1.4 per cent during the year, in Western Germany by 7 per cent, in France and Italy by 4 per cent, in China by no less than 25 per cent. It is more than likely that within a decade or so Russia and China will become important investors overseas and every ton of capital exported will of course be heavily wrapped in the ideology of equalitarianism.

Expansion in Britain has been held up very largely by the pressure on steel and engineering capacity, and in the next few years the iron and steel industry will have to make dramatic progress to keep in step with the rest of the economy. For growth prospects therefore the shares of the giants, Dorman Long, United Steel, Firth and Brown, Stewarts and Lloyds, Colvilles Summers, and so on, are worth the investors' closest attention. Domestic politics and the ugly threat of re-nationalization notwithstanding.

MAMMON



In the Country

Call the Cattle-doctor Home

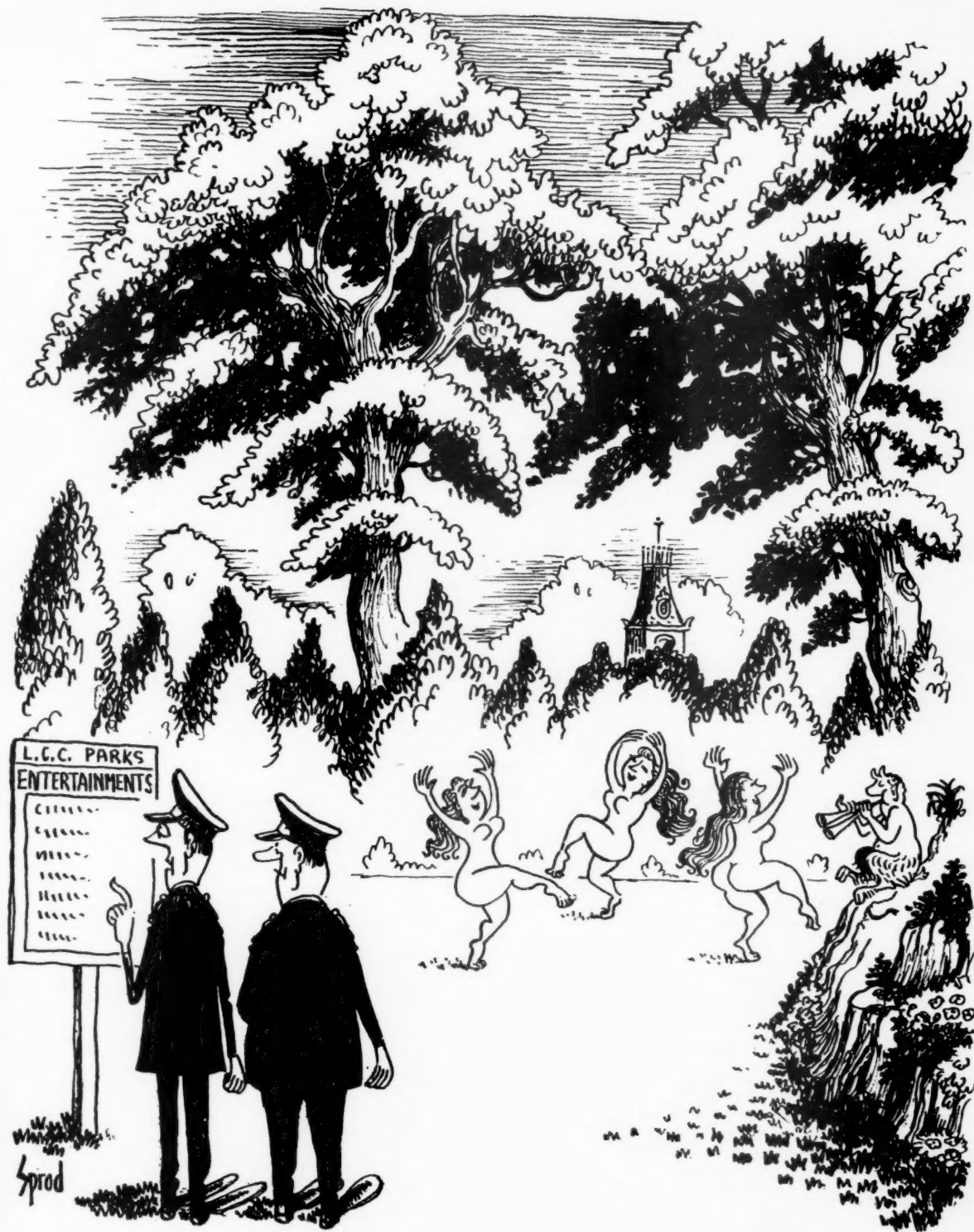
RADIO is certainly a blessing. At least it is to cows. I'm not trying to give a left-handed compliment to the B.B.C. Cows are not sufficiently bovine to appreciate Parlour Games. I'm referring to the short-wave transmitter or radio telephone with which our local vet has equipped all his cars so that when we telephone him he can call the assistant who is nearest to us and direct him to go straight to our farm. Before he installed this equipment we sometimes had to wait as much as twelve hours. That delay used to cost me as much as two cows a year.

With milk fever everything depends on how promptly you can get the beast injected. Yesterday we were carrying in bales of hay. While we made a load I noticed a cow seeking the shelter of the hedge to calve there. When we returned for a second load only half an hour later, she was already licking her offspring and the afterbirth was safely away. It looked like a perfect calving without any kind of complication. Nevertheless the cow was off her feet and incapable of

moving that same evening. Milk fever is caused by the sudden flow of milk draining the cow's body of lime. This deficiency partially paralyses the brain and makes the animal run a temperature and unable to stand. Heifers seldom get the fever. It is most prevalent with fourth-calvers. Before the war cows which got milk fever generally died of it. Later, the vets used to come along and pump air into the teats so as to inflate the udder and thus obstruct the formation of milk. This method seldom saved the cow and often wasted a lot of time. But now milk fever is cured quickly if your vet has a radio telephone. He simply digs a needle into the cow and injects about two and a half pints of soluble calcium beneath her skin. It is rapidly absorbed by her blood and quickly adjusts the deficiency. You can stand and observe the calcium giving consciousness back to the animal's brain. First the animal raises its head, flicks its ears and its tail. You have then only to show it its calf to make it lumber on to its feet again.

When the vet has done his job he gets into his car and drives to a high part of the field and pushes his aerial through the roof, and with a transmitter worked from the car battery he calls up his headquarters. A girl in the office there tells him that there is another case of milk fever on a farm which adjoins mine; that saves him a journey and my neighbour a cow. It's a pity the B.B.C. isn't half so useful.

RONALD DUNCAN



"That's odd—shouldn't to-day be the Slagthorpe Co-operative Society Male Voice Choir?"



BOOKING OFFICE

Lewisite

Wyndham Lewis: *A Portrait of the Artist as the Enemy*. Geoffrey Wagner. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 35/-

WYNDHAM LEWIS's death some months ago makes a summing up of his characteristics appropriate. Mr. Geoffrey Wagner has done a first-class job. With colossal industry in tracking down material from forgotten periodicals he sets out Lewis's ideas against their largely Continental background.

Percy Wyndham Lewis was born in 1882, although, with typical secretiveness, he tended to lop off a couple of years from his age. There were a few terms at Rugby; the Slade, where he was regarded as a student of quite unusual promise; then Munich and Paris, the German period leaving a decided mark. His short stories began to appear in 1909. From that time until the end of his life he practised equally as writer and painter.

Of his pictures it is sufficient to say here that his gift was of an exceptional order, marred—so it seems to me—by some trait in himself extraneous to his skill as a draughtsman or vision as a colourist: a personal and gratuitous adjunct, least apparent in his abstract drawings, most unsympathetic in his portraits.

The Wild Body (1926) represents some of the best of his early work collected in one volume, the stories of Brittany and Spain being as good as, or better than, anything he subsequently did: original, ruthless, grimly poetic. In 1916 *Tarr* appeared, a novel about German artists in Paris. Heavily influenced by Dostoevsky, stuffed with ideas like an over-rich, hopelessly indigestible plum-pudding, it remains a remarkable book; justly claimed by its author as a new departure. *Tarr*, its hero, artist in hard collar and bowler hat, is the expression of Lewis's lifelong crusade against Romanticism.

Space does not allow consideration of all Lewis's tremendous flow of publications, some of very uneven quality; but *The Caliph's Design* (1919),

Time and Western Man (1927), *The Childermass* (1928), *The Apes of God* (1930) and the volume of poems, *One-Way Song* (1933), should be mentioned as works of especial interest.

It is the great merit of Mr. Wagner's book that he does not attempt to gloss over the manifold, often ludicrous, contradictions in Lewis's writing. He accepts them, at the same time charting stimulating thought where stimulating thought exists. He points out that



Lewis was not the only one to modify untenable statements, Sir Herbert Read, for example, writing in *The Philosophy of Modern Art* (1936): "Surrealism, like Communism, does not call upon artists to surrender their individuality," while the reissue of that same book in 1952 states (without notice of alteration): "Surrealism does not, like Communism, call upon artists to surrender their individuality."

Lewis derived some of his ideas from Benda's *Trahison des clercs*, of which the theme is that the intellectuals have sold the pass by grovelling before feminism, youth-worship, non-European standards; and in general, as

might be said now, before values promulgated by cinema and TV. Benda called himself a Neoclassicist. That was the label Lewis also assumed.

Lewis's claims to being "classical" seem to me suspect; that so patent a romanticist as the late Roy Campbell, the poet, was one of his few staunch supporters, illustrates how close Lewis was to the "romanticism of action," even when he expressly deplored it.

Lewis's unwillingness to allow himself to be assessed by any normal criticism, his claim to special consideration, his blowing of his own trumpet, his subjectivity (e.g. disregarding music in the arts, because he himself knew nothing of music), his disapproval of everybody and everything, in short his perfectionism, seem to me "romantic" in the highest degree—positively Byronic.

Lewis claimed that his approach was "exterior." He hated all that was "interior"—psychology, Bergson, Proust, etc. Was he not, in truth, a man afraid of himself, afraid of his own secrets? Acquaintances tell countless stories of his painful shyness, combined with aggressive lack of ease no matter in what company he found himself.

At the same time his "exterior" approach is of formidable brilliance. No novelist, in the sense that a novelist should be able to create character and movement, Lewis could only describe the individuals known to him personally. This he does in a technique unsurpassed. The look, speech, manner, idiosyncrasy, the very odour of those impaled on his pen was caught with the conviction of nightmare. He was one of the outstanding figures of his period, even though something in himself kept him from the topmost heights.

ANTHONY POWELL

Liar

Angel. Elizabeth Taylor. *Peter Davies*, 15/-

"Do you read a great deal, Angelica?" asked the schoolmistress, nervous lest the essay by a fifteen-year-old had been lifted from Ruskin, Wilde or Pater. "No, I never read... I don't think it's interesting." Angel added that she

played the harp in her spare time. Of course she did not, nor was she the rightful owner of Paradise House with the white peacocks on the terrace, nor had her mother (the widow of a "small" grocer) lost her inheritance because she had married beneath her. Angel continued to write flowery grandiloquent prose, until her novels, where Greek and Roman deities mixed inconsequently, where champagne bottles were opened with corkscrews and there was a "Nay" on every page, allowed her to buy Paradise House, import two shabby peacocks, and support a painter husband. The story, though not quite in Miss Taylor's best manner, is dexterously handled from the first page to the tragic end. There is a good deal of compassion, a little humour, and some irony in this fairy tale with a twist.

B. E. B.

They Hanged My Sainly Billy. Robert Graves. Cassell, 21/-

A pillar of the church, and popular in his small Staffordshire town, William Palmer was a young surgeon who took to the turf, seduction, forging, horse-doping, stealing from his friends, and insurance trickery on a grand scale. Suspected of fourteen murders by poison, he was publicly hanged in 1856, after a trial of Dickensian absurdity in which eminent doctors disagreed as totally as they still can, and the bench made no attempt to conceal its reckless bias.

Mr. Graves persuades us that Palmer was innocent and fell victim to the animosities of the police, the Jockey Club and the insurance companies; but his method of writing the book as by a contemporary interviewing everyone even remotely concerned with Palmer sinks the reader neck-high in gossip. Except as farce the trial was unexciting, for counsel for the defence was scared professionally. Sometimes a slice of early Victorian low life comes through vividly, but it has to be worked for.

E. O. D. K.

Spastics in Cheyne Walk. Dr. Joan Saunders and Marjorie Napier. Pitman Medical Publishing Co., 20/-

Books appear as beautifully printed and illustrated as this is, their *raison d'être* to raise funds for benevolence; this book primarily seeks to give. It describes the work and organization of a unique small hospital in the hope of assisting others who wish to help unhappy children. It may also wipe out a feeling of guilt and create fresh hope in many distracted parents.

B. E. S.

The Three Legions. Gregory Solon. Constable, 18/-

Mr. Solon's novel describes the defeat of Varus by Arminius and the German tribes. Most of the time he is writing military narrative, the kind of history that can now be tackled by men who have known what it is like to march,

camp, fight and be picked on by the N.C.O.; but he varies the description of the life of action with gooeey episodes about the love of a scarred Commander and a fresh young soldier for a beautiful German captive and with portentous comments by the Commander's secretary, who intends to write a secret history of the campaign.

However, the best parts of the novel are far, far longer than the misjudged attempts to provide heavy relief, and the best parts are very good indeed. The Roman Legion becomes as convincing as the task force in *The Naked and the Dead*, though its conversation is much less lurid. Mr. Solon is strongest, where most historical novelists in the recent past have been weakest, in describing both "Servitude et Grandeur Militaires."

R. G. G. P.

AT THE OPERA

Trovatore and *Tosca*
(COVENT GARDEN)



"ITALIAN season at Covent Garden," a hypodermic phrase, gives you a 'ninetyish or Edwardian shot in the arm... In a corner of the crush room truant M.P.s consult the ticker tape, every corsage carries its orchid, the drawing rooms behind the grander private boxes are blue with cigar smoke.

Such is the vision. Actuality, 1957, has been a bit different.

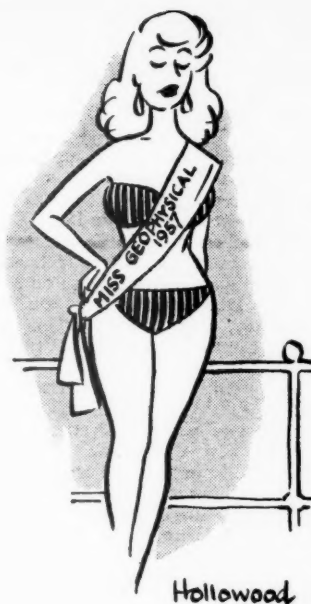
It began with *Trovatore*, a dim business sung against frowsty scenery by principals off whom the Italians recently at the Stoll could have knocked spots. The performance was bilingual. James Johnston, called in at the last minute to replace another tenor who had cried off, did Manrico in English against the others' Italian. At that his singing was at least as good as anything around him. But the language mix jars. "Don't be hard on us," says the C.G. management. "Bilingual tenors are so rare that you can't expect us to keep an Italianate understudy on the hob."

What? Not even for a performance at gala (i.e. double) prices?

Tosca was supposed to make up for everything. It didn't.

As Puccini and his librettists saw her, Floria Tosca was a Juno of, I suppose, twenty-eight or thirty. On this score Zinka Milanov's maturity poleaxed illusion from the start. In an age of lissome and well-voiced sopranos an incongruous note was struck by her dalliance in the basilica with a Cavardossi who looked twenty years younger. Should anybody reproach me with unchivalry, I reply that in the opera house, as in any sort of theatre, illusion must be served. In *Tosca* nothing is more ruinous to illusion than a first act turned into Mothering Sunday.

As well as being young the Cavardossi, Franco Corelli, is frantically handsome. From his phrasing and tone in



Recondita armonia and the gay, lordly way he tossed his hat to the sacristan before putting on his painter's smock, I thought he was sure of a tops rating before the night was over. It was the scene in the Farnese Palace that undid him. While Scarpia was questioning him policewise he feigned indifference by going over his lapels and cuffs so persistently with flicking forefinger that I longed to hand a valet's brush over the footlights. Dragged from the torture chamber (why wasn't he blooded, by the way?) he fell on his knees and laughed helplessly at the news of Bonaparte's win at Marengo. Prizing himself up, he hit the F sharp of *Vittoria*, hung there like a window cleaner from a sill, then hoiked himself to A sharp and clung to that in the same way. Long before he had finished, tenuto-fanciers in the gallery were clapping calluses on to their hands. The rest of the arioso was hardly noticed.

Scarpia was sung by Gian Giacomo Guelfi, so majestic a personality that I was reminded of Johnson on Edmund Burke. Any stranger sheltering from a shower in the same doorway with Mr. Guelfi would know intuitively he was in the presence of Somebody. Between Burke and Scarpia, however, there are differences—a hint here, let us say, a nuance there. Mr. Guelfi's voice, as big as his personality and of excellent grain, was unsparingly used. He could not hand one of his strong-arms a letter, saying "Deliver this," without baying and gnashing his syllables as if the man were hard of hearing on one side and hard of understanding on the other.

Through the night's oddities Alexander Gibson, conductor, threaded a subdued way.

CHARLES REID

AT THE PLAY

Cymbeline
(STRATFORD-ON-AVON)
Titus Andronicus (STOLL)

THE two great oaks flanking the stage of the Memorial Theatre for *Cymbeline* have been made, strangely enough, from plaster casts of senior Stratford trees. So lifelike are they that one expects to see "Ernie loves Daisy" carved on their bark, just as one expects live Lyceum rabbits to frolic from the bosage of a set in which Lila de Mobili and Stiva Douboujinsky have run riot in trailing ivy, birds' nests, hay, cobwebs and other authentic items from the deep countryside. Little space is left for action by an architectural background that blends Gothic with Wind-in-the-Willows; and perhaps on the grounds that logically *Cymbeline* should be played mostly in woad, these anachronisms are nothing to the jumble of periods in Miss de Mobili's dresses, which range from mediaeval through Elizabethan right up to Empire. But whether you like it or not the effect is romantic, and it is as a story from the Never-Never Land that Peter Hall, with some justification, has produced the play. Joan Miller's hissing Queen becomes the wicked fairy, and *Cymbeline* a half-brother to Neptune, wearing his hat and magic cricket-pads. As the preposterous disclosures of the last act flood in and he murmurs, with reason, "When shall I hear all through?" it is not a slice of history but the unravelling of a pantomime. To add to this

impression Mr. Hall breaks with tradition and includes the ghostly visit to Posthumus of his deceased family.

Into the most wooden characters Robert Harris can breathe life and authority and his *Cymbeline* is majestic. Richard Johnson's Posthumus survives the lunacy of his Roman adventure to grow into a sympathetic hero; Geoffrey Keen's Iachimo, half-good, is suitably dashing in Rome and yet ineffectual in a badly cluttered bedroom scene. Clive Revill makes something of the idea of Cloten as a backward boy who would nowadays simply be put on probation, and Mark Dignam is an engaging Pisanio.

But Imogen, after all, is what matters in *Cymbeline*, and though much of this production is too prettily busy Dame Peggy Ashcroft's sincerity shines through it beautifully. Her Imogen is touching, and honest, and charmingly unaffected, and in her rather clumsy boy's disguise she moves as to the trousers born.

So far as I could judge from the extreme wing of the dress circle Peter Brook's astonishing production of *Titus Andronicus* is much as it was at Stratford. Since then it has staggered even Tito, and I beg any reader who values Shakespeare and the theatre to plough his way through whatever monsoon to the Stoll during its brief visit. Mr. Brook's achievement is to galvanize us into accepting this cannibal blood-bath without a snigger as an immensely exciting experience. His arresting set, his *musique concrète* that is like the dripping of

doomed taps, his faultless grouping give the play a totally unexpected effect. At all points a fine cast is marvellously together, and Sir Laurence Olivier's rugged, tired, extraordinarily moving Titus is as good as anything he has done.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

A Dead Secret (Piccadilly—5/6/57), Paul Scofield a memorable poisoner. Certainly Anouilh's *Waltz of the Toreadors* (Criterion—14/3/56) if you have not yet seen it. And *At the Drop of a Hat* (Fortune—16/1/57), witty two-man revue. ERIC KEOWN

AT THE BALLET

The Royal Ballet
(SADLER'S WELLS)

THE peripatetic portion of the Royal Ballet has returned to its old home in Islington after alongish Continental tour and it may be the last the so-called junior company sees of Sadler's Wells Theatre. The name is destined to drop out of use and the two companies, now comprising the Royal Ballet, which from the beginning have been under single artistic direction are, it is understood, to be completely unified.

Principal interest in the opening programme was the revival of André Howard's war-time work, *La Fête Étrange*. This elegant, romantic ballet has a commendably simple scenario by Ronald Crichton, suggested by an episode in a novel of Alain-Fournier's. Some of Fauré's piano music orchestrated by Guy Warrack nicely fits the sad, sentimental tale of the rustic lad who, beholding an aristocratic bride, falls in love instantaneously. Its setting in a garden of an 18th century French château gave Sophie Fedorovitch an opportunity which she took with ravishing result. Her exquisite dresses and décor provide the element of highest distinction in the work as now presented. They deserve, as do the dancers, to be better lighted. How odd it is that the lighting expert in the theatre so often forgets that his first duty is to enable the audience to see what is designed to please its eyes. All subtleties of lighting are subordinate to that consideration.

Ann Heaton, who left Covent Garden to dance ballerina roles with the second company, has developed notably in personality and confidence. As the Bride in *La Fête Étrange* she is languorously lyrical and has for partner in the bucolic role Donald Britton, another young dancer who has come on well. He gets character into the Country Boy, and though Donald Macleary as the lordly young Bridegroom is a shade too stiff in manner he points the contrast effectively, particularly in his difficult dramatic moments of complete immobility.

Among other young dancers, who are giving a foretaste of what Covent Garden may gain by the coming coalescence,



Cloten—CLIVE REVILL

[*Cymbeline*]

Margaret Hill, Brenda Bolton, Patricia Cox, and Michael Boulton are outstanding. Miss Hill is a well-graced dancer who has the infusion of the comic spirit demanded by *Solitaire*, which completed the programme. As the lonely Girl, repeatedly left, to Malcolm Arnold's music, to play "a kind of game for one" in this slightly over-long joke, she excelled. Kenneth Macmillan's invention as choreographer was also well served by the pert piquancy of Miss Bolton.

Doreen Tempest, another leading member of the company, would have been seen to better advantage in Macmillan's *House of Birds* had not the whole production suggested slackness in artistic supervision.

Ashton's pre-war *Apparitions*, for which Constant Lambert arranged a Lisztian score and Cecil Beaton did the scenery and dresses, now seems old-fashioned and pseudo-romantic. Its revival shows afresh, however, what an asset the Company has in John Field, who danced the part of the Poet.

C. B. MORTLOCK

AT THE PICTURES

The Bachelor Party
The Prince and the Showgirl
A Man Escaped

THE only thing to do is to write about three this week—beginning with *The Bachelor Party* (Director: Delbert Mann), because it has two heavy crosses to bear from the start: first, the coincidence of its arrival in the same week as two other very different pictures that will attract immensely more attention, and second, the audience it will get. Plenty of people will go in as usual half-way through, and plenty more will go in at all only because of its "X" certificate. In recommending this as one of the most adult, intelligent, well written, sensitively acted and directed and moving little films of the decade I have to bear in mind that most of you will see it in the company of a crowd of simple minds quite incapable of appreciating it and only too ready to spoil it for everybody else by eagerly laughing—not to say sniggering—in the wrong places. It is built round the "bachelor party" thrown by his friends at the office for a young man about to marry, but on another level it is the story of the effect of this occasion on a young married couple, and it comes home to everyone, man or woman, married or not. There is no room for details: I can simply mention the exquisite playing, notably of Patricia Smith as the young wife, the clever direction of the rowdy little party itself and the brilliantly perceptive way the downward shift of atmosphere is conveyed, from genuine gaiety through alcoholic gaiety to crazy insistence on keeping the party alive. It is all quite admirably done, packed with well-observed character and jewelled moments, often amusing, sometimes moving, a pleasure to remember. I only hope that



[The Prince and the Showgirl

Elsie—MARILYN MONROE

Grand Duke Charles—SIR LAURENCE OLIVIER

when you see it you have the luck to sit among people with some sense.

I needn't spend much space on *The Prince and the Showgirl* (Director: Laurence Olivier), for you have been reading about it for months; it proves to be a captivating piece of straightforward entertainment, splendidly done. Here again you will have to contend with the rest of the audience—I know because they had crammed the Press show with just that sort of audience, to show us what the rest of you have to put up with—and what with its delighted laughter and comments of "Oo" at the 1911 dresses, not to mention the sometimes unsatisfactory sound reproduction, you may miss an occasional bright line; but it won't matter. The whole point of this piece is the incongruity that is summed up in the title and the cast list: not only is the story concerned with a prince and a showgirl, but the personalities who portray them are also (in popular imagination) the equivalent of a prince and a showgirl themselves. As one who has two or three times before applauded Marilyn Monroe for being more than a good comedienne, I don't have to express the fashionable surprise to find her doing so well; and Sir Laurence's talents both as actor and director hardly need underlining. The whole thing is very enjoyable.

A Man Escaped, or *Un Condamné à Mort s'est Echappé* (Director: Robert Bresson), develops astounding interest and suspense in a story of the most extreme simplicity. The story is true, but as I have said before this fact is irrelevant in judging a film, though it may add an accent when you think about it afterwards. This is the plain tale of a

young Frenchman's bitterly laborious escape from prison in Occupied France in 1943: the plain tale, from his acquisition—after several months' wait—of an iron spoon, which he slowly sharpens into a chisel on the stone floor, to his drop into the street, over the last of several walls, from a rope plaited inch by inch of strips from his mattress and other oddments. With the hard-earned chisel he cuts a movable panel from the door (sweeping up the chips nightly with one straw from his broom); with the heel of his shoe, he gently, quietly straightens wires from his bed-springs. Other prisoners are despairing and sceptical when he meets them at the communal wash-trough: "It would only work in a novel..." But his almost mystical tenacity in the end gets him out—with a companion, a youth he had at first hesitated to trust. This is a brilliant job, enormously compelling and satisfying.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

With *A Man Escaped* there is a short called *Artist's Proof*, which shows in colour six artists in turn demonstrating their methods in woodcut, lithography, etching, aquatint, engraving and silk-screen; quite fascinating to anyone interested in art and the techniques of art. *Saint Joan* (3/7/57) continues; and of course there's *Around the World in Eighty Days*—review next week.

Of the new releases that were Press-shown, only one interested me: *The Happy Road* (3/7/57), which for all its simplicity and occasional amateurishness I'm sure almost anybody will find immensely enjoyable.

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

Press Conference

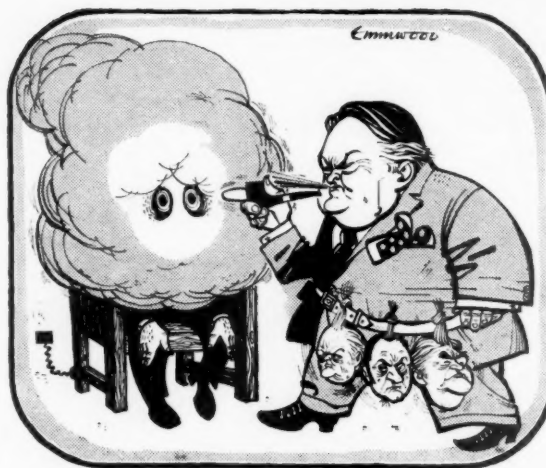
IN Arnold Bennett's *The Card* Denry Machin gets into and out of many awkward situations with his habit of reversing the verbal charges. "The question is," said the Councillor, 'can you think of any more ideas as good?'

'Well,' said Denry, 'can you?'

And there was the delicious occasion when, on being invited by Sir Jee to partake of light refreshments, he held out a carrot and replied with crude insolence "Will you?"

Somebody has been instructing the guests of "Press Conference" in the evasive tactics of Denry Machin. In recent weeks we have had such distinguished patrons of publicity as Mr. Bevan, Dr. Evatt, Signor Annigoni, the Duke of Bedford and Mr. Randolph Churchill in the hot seat (it is hot), and each in his own way has delighted me by turning the tables on his inquisitors. Inevitably on these occasions the British sense of fair play puts nearly all viewers on the side of the willing victim in the dock: he is outnumbered four to one by some of the sharpest characters in Fleet Street, he has to answer difficult, often delicate, questions right off the cuff, and he has to submit to the close-up scrutiny of about five million viewers. We may not agree with him, we may not like him, but in the circumstances we are on his side. In the same perverse way we applaud the mistakes of the Wimbledon seed when he or she is opposed to a rabbit.

It is this unbalance of forces that makes "Press Conference" such an entertaining programme. We seldom learn anything



[Press Conference]

FRANCIS WILLIAMS; RANDOLPH CHURCHILL; ANEURIN BEVAN; PIETRO ANNIGONI;

new about the guest (the gentlemen of the Press arm themselves for the battle with sheaves of their own Press-cuttings) and it is unusual for the conversation to climb above the standard of the glossy magazine, but with a Denry Machin holding the fort and lobbing fireballs back into the ranks of the insurgents there is enough excitement to disarm serious qualitative criticism.

The Duke of Bedford was so charming and bland that it was impossible for the team to pin him down. He admitted their darts readily enough and then laughed them off, and the result was that he retained both his mobility and his nobility. The panel can never have had an easier or a more irrepressible target.

Dr. Evatt's performance was that of the trained and truculent disputant. Cornered, he refused to surrender. The questioner's facts were all wrong, they had already answered the question themselves, they had not allowed him to

complete his previous answer. A large part of the programme therefore consisted of Dr. Evatt's testy counter-punches—"Please allow me to finish," "I've already dealt with that," "You're misinformed," and so on. He seemed less than masterful only when he had to side-step shrewd questions about Australia's immigration policy and his own attitude to the colour bar.

Mr. Bevan is so robust and mentally sure of himself that he needs no sympathy. I admired his calmness under pressure and his sly digs at the raw and unprotected spots in the panel's arguments. With delightful hauteur he brushed aside one pertinent and awkward question with "Surely we need not resort to metaphor; let's call a spade a spade . . ."

Signor Annigoni hit back with almost every question. Invited to reveal his earnings and to pass judgment on painters past and present, he countered by inviting the team to bat first. With rare good humour and remarkable verbal ingenuity (he thinks in Italian) he defended the traditional school of academicians against all comers and made the more aggressive of his denigrators seem woefully ignorant and myopic.

Mr. Randolph Churchill was Mr. Churchill, Randolph.

I have said nothing about the personnel of the panel. "Press Conference" stands or falls, according to the ability of the B.B.C. to find reasonably eloquent and pressurized personalities willing to submit to this third-degree grilling. The panel is not unimportant, but its chief function is to bristle economically when the guest looks back in anger.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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